The Life of Saint Anne

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The Middle English Stanzaic Versions of the Life of Saint Anne

Early English Text Society.

Original Series, No. 174.

1928 (for 1927).

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University of Minnesota, U.S.A., MSS.

The Middle English Stanzaic Versions of the Life of Saint Anne

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EDITED BY
ROSCOE E. PARKER

WITHDRAWN

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PREFACE

This edition of the Middle English stanzaic versions of the life of St. Anne was undertaken several years ago at the suggestion of Professor Carleton Brown, to whom I am under the greatest obligations for counsel and assistance at almost every step of its preparation. Although the pressure of other duties has perhaps unduly delayed the completion of the task, he has never lost interest in its progress nor failed to lend of his store of knowledge and wisdom.

In the preparation of this edition, I have constantly endeavoured to keep in mind Ritson's dictum: "To correct the obvious errors of an illiterate transcribeer, to supply irremediable defects, and to make sense of nonsense, are certainly dutys of an editour of ancient poetry." Fortunately, there have been few "obvious errors" to correct or "irremediable defects" to supply. I have contented myself, therefore, with trying to present an accurate text accompanied by such information in the introduction and notes as would "make sense" of what might otherwise be "nonsense" to those not familiar with the peculiarities and associations of "ancient poetry." All textual expansions have accordingly been italicized, and all orthographic and linguistic peculiarities have been dealt with in the notes to the text. In order to prevent undue expansion of the introduction, the lists of words used to illustrate phonological changes have been made typical rather than complete for each poem.

It is a pleasure to acknowledge my indebtedness to Professor Arthur G. Brodeur, of the University of California, for his generous assistance, especially in the philological study of these poems. I have constantly

drawn on his thorough knowledge of early English dialects in my phonological investigations and have always profited from his criticisms. My thanks are also due to Professor George R. Noyes, of the same University, for his kindly assistance in the final revision of my copy. My greatest debt of gratitude, however, is due my wife, who has shared the labour of collating the entire text with the MSS. and has contributed largely to whatever of accuracy and value this edition may possess.

Roscoe E. Parker.

University of Tennessee.

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INTRODUCTION

I. Background.

With the single exception of the version contained in Osbern Bokenham's *Lyues of Seyntys*, the Middle English stanzaic versions of the life of St. Anne have not been printed heretofore nor made the object of special study. This is somewhat surprising, since the life of St. Anne is almost inseparably connected with the life and miracles of the Blessed Virgin and with the stories of the childhood of Jesus, both of which contributed much to English life, literature, and thought during the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries. We have, it is true, the Joachim and Anna story in the *Legenda Aurea* and the *Cursor Mundi*; but these are parts of larger cycles and neither is stanzaic in form. Of these stanzaic versions we have heard little, although modern scholarship has devoted considerable attention to the closely related legends of Mary. Although the body of extant literature in honour of St. Anne is smaller than that in honour of the Virgin Mary, the popularity of St. Anne was persistent in both France and England until the end of the fifteenth century; and the extant Middle English stanzaic versions of the life of St. Anne are here presented for the first time in the belief that they afford significant contributions to our knowledge of Middle English life and literature.

The medieval popularity of St. Anne as a patron saint, the widespread observance of St. Anne's Day, and the considerable body of literature celebrating the life of St. Anne bear witness to her influence in both France and England. The evidence of this influence is to be found in guild records, religious festivals, and literary productions. A brief summary of this evidence reveals the following facts: St. Anne was the patron saint of the first strictly religious guild recorded in the city of London. This was the St. Anne's Guild in the Church of St. Owen, Newgate, established during the reign of King John.[1] Before the end of the fourteenth century similar guilds were flourishing in Lincoln, Lynn,

[1] Westlake, H. F., *The Parish Gilds of Mediaeval England*, London, 1909, p. 16.

Bury St. Edmunds, and other places.[1] By this time the number of St. Anne's Guilds in the city of London had increased to four.[2] The St. Anne's Guild at Lincoln was active in dramatic productions throughout the fifteenth century and was still in existence at the middle of the sixteenth century.[3] Doubtless there were many similar guilds throughout England whose records are no longer extant.

St. Anne's popularity as a patron saint was greatly enhanced by the ecclesiastical sanction of the Feast of St. Anne. This festival, which originated in the Oriental Church during the fourth century, was celebrated by the Church at Constantinople, during the first half of the eighth century, on July 25. It eventually received recognition throughout the province of the Western Church, and July 26 was set apart as St. Anne's Day. On this day the Feast of St. Anne was celebrated at Doune in 1291. Pope Urban VI introduced the festival into England by an edict dated November 21, 1378.[4] Thereafter St. Anne's Day was celebrated in play, poetry, and festival.[5] The relation of the popular festivals to the poems published herewith will be discussed hereafter.

As has been stated already, the poems in celebration of St. Anne were numerous both in France and in England. The French poems are, on the whole, earlier and perhaps more numerous than the English. M. Chabaneau has published the most important of the French versions, *Le Romanz de Saint Fanuel et de Sainte Anne et de Nostre Dame et de Nostre Segnor et de Ses Apostres*, a long poem of the thirteenth or fourteenth century, from MS. Montpelier 350.[6] Another poem containing practically the same material is to be found in MS. Grenoble 1137, which belongs to the fourteenth century.[7] In addition to these long poems, M. P. Meyer has pointed out a number of shorter poems on the same subject.[8] Likewise many English poems in celebration of or supplication

[1] Westlake, H. F., *The Parish Gilds of Mediaeval England*, London, 1909, pp. 168, 196, and 226.

[2] Unwin, George, *The Guilds and Companies of London*, London and New York, 1909, pp. 367–369.

[3] Leach, Arthur F., "Some English Plays and Players" in *An Old English Miscellany Presented to Dr. F. J. Furnivall*, Oxford, 1901, pp. 233 ff. See also *14th Report of the British Historical MSS. Commission*, Appendix 8, pp. 32–40.

[4] For a summary of the history of St. Anne's Day, see *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, New York, 1907, I, 538–539; Baring-Gould, S., *Lives of the Saints*, London and New York, 1898, VIII, 564 ff.; and Budge, Sir E. A. Wallis, *Legends of Our Lady Mary the Perpetual Virgin and Her Mother Hanna*, London, 1922, xxv–l.

[5] Chambers, E. K., *The Mediaeval Stage*, Oxford, 1903, II, 118, and Leach, *op. cit.*

[6] *Revue des langues romanes*, XXVII, 157–258. I am indebted to Professor George L. Hamilton of Cornell for directing my attention to this poem.

[7] Bonnard, Jean, *Les Traductions de la Bible en Vers Français au Moyen Age*, Paris, 1884, pp. 181–193.

[8] *Romania*, XV, 271 and 334 ff.; XVI, 44 ff.; XXV, 542 ff.

to St. Anne were written between the end of the thirteenth and the beginning of the sixteenth centuries. In addition to those of unknown authorship, poems in honour of St. Anne were written by John Audelay, John Lydgate, and Osbern Bokenham.[1] All these things—guild records, festivals, and literary productions—are evidences of the medieval popularity of St. Anne and indicate, to some extent, the position which she occupies in the annals of hagiography.

The foregoing summary of the history and popularity of the cult of St. Anne furnishes the necessary background for the study of her life as it is presented herewith. Such study as seems necessary will now be made of the date, content, and language of these poems. This will be followed by a study of their sources and an attempt to estimate their influence on Middle English drama.

II. Manuscripts and Dialects.

Three Middle English stanzaic versions of the life of St. Anne, none of which has been printed heretofore, are known to be in existence; and two of these versions have survived in two MSS. each. These versions are contained in the University of Minnesota MS. Z. 822, N. 81 (formerly Phillips 8122), Trinity College Cambridge 601 (English Poets R. 3. 21), Chetham Library 8009, Bodleian 10234 (Tanner 407), and Harley 4012. The first of these versions is in twelve-line stanzas, the two copies of the second are in rime royal, and the two copies of the third are in four-line stanzas. In both form and content they constitute three different types, or groups; and all of them, in their present form, probably belong to the fifteenth century.

The oldest, longest, and most significant of these poems appears as an insertion at f. 185*b* of the Minnesota MS., which is a North English Homily Collection, and continues through f. 215*a*.[2] That this is not the original version of the poem is indicated by certain scribal errors, omissions, and dialectal inconsistencies which will be discussed hereafter. This poem is written, nevertheless, by the same hand as the body of the MS.—a hand of the end of the fourteenth or beginning of the fifteenth

[1] Brown, Carleton, *A Register of Middle English Religious and Didactic Verse*, Oxford, 1920, II, 407.

[2] This is not the last poem in the MS., as was erroneously stated by Professor G. H. Gerould in his dissertation, *The North English Homily Collection*, p. 7. It is followed by a fragment of the life of St. George. This was printed in *Modern Language Notes*, XXXVIII, 97 ff.

century.[1] The writing of the MS. is clear and offers little, if any, variation from the usual hand of the beginning of the fifteenth century. The scribe generally uses ȝ (þ) for an initial *th-* and sometimes for a final *-th*. He also uses the stroked *ll* and *h*, though apparently without significance, and employs the usual stroke over a final vowel to indicate the addition of an *m* or *n*. The same stroke is sometimes used over *m* or *n* to indicate the insertion of a preceding *u*. The curved stroke is so indiscriminately employed after a final consonant that it apparently has little significance. It occasionally seems to suggest the addition of a final *-e*, but it is just as frequently used where such an addition would be preposterous. The long stroked *s*, however, is consistently used for *ser*, and the stroked *p* for *per* and for *pre* or *pro* is distinguished by a straight and a curved stroke respectively. Medial vowels in *þat* and *with* are generally omitted, and the *t* in these words is written above the initial consonant. The ȝ is frequently used for *y*, especially in pronouns; and it is sometimes used for *z* and for final *-gh*. Expansion of these contractions is indicated throughout the text by the use of italics. The stroked *h* and *ll*, on the other hand, have been disregarded except in cases where they clearly indicate contractions.

This poem is written in twelve-line stanzas riming aabccbddbeeb. The riming couplets are four-stressed lines and the tail rime lines are three-stressed lines. The long lines are written down the left side of the MS. pages and the b-rime lines are written down the margins at the right of the pages. These b-rime lines do not, however, constitute a refrain so far as the thought of the stanza is concerned. On the contrary, they carry forward the thought of the stanza just as the other lines do. This method is consistently maintained throughout the 3456 lines of the poem, which relates the whole life of St. Anne after her marriage to Joachim and includes the life of the Virgin and of Jesus to the time of the calling of the first six disciples.

The dialect of the poem is generally Northern, but it contains many Midland and a few Southern forms, as the following summary will show.[2]

[1] The writing is apparently that of the early fifteenth century. Wells, J. E., says, however, in his *Manual of the Writings in Middle English*, p. 290, "not before 1375–1400." Gerould, G. H., *op. cit.*, says, "not earlier than the last quarter of the fourteenth century." The same authority, in his *Saints' Legends*, p. 171, thinks it safe to regard the original *North English Homily Collection* "as a product of the earlier fourteenth century."

[2] See the bibliography for a complete list of the works consulted in the preparation of this section.

Words in the phonological tables are starred if they occur in rime in one of the places listed, except in cases where the occurrence of the word in rime is of no significance.

1. O.E. *ā* appears in two forms :
   a. Nth. *ā* 305 times : ane 422, 641, 937 ; bane(s) 564, 2433 ; hame* 98, 161, 169 ; swa* 15.
   b. Mid. or Sth. *ǭ* 233 times : one* 545, 986, 1450 ; bone* 117, 197, 690 ; home 725, 1725, 1837.
2. O.E. *a* is lengthened in open syllables to *ā* : name* 17, 2065 ; shame* 97 ; tale 2605.
3. Merc. *a*, W.S. *ea* + *ld* appears in two forms :
   a. Nth. *ā* 133 times : ald(e) 493, 497, 712 ; bald* 2150, 2457, 2491 ; hald(e)* 139, 680, 1029.
   b. Mid. *ǭ* 31 times : old(e) 409, 568, 871 ; hold* 2924.
4. O.E. *aē* + *r* in adverbs and verbs appears in three forms :
   a. Nth. *ā* 54 times : whare 1076, 1508, 1833 ; þar(e)* 227, 420.
      Note : war(e)* (O.N. **vāru**) occurs 54 times : 221, 295, 320.
   b. Mid. *ē* 162 times ; wer(e) 472, 475, 476 ; þer* 536, 637, 1076.
   c. Sth. *ǭ* three times : thore 1485, 2080 ; whore 2160.
      Note : wore* (O.N. **vǭru**) occurs twice in 362, 1376.
5. O.E. *y*, *ȳ* appears as Nth. *i*, *ī*, written *y* : ffyrste 968 ; fyre 226 ; hyll* 159, 1062, 2374 ; syn* 676, 848, 991.
6. O.E. *c* appears in two forms :
   a. *k* in guttural positions and before palatal vowels arising from umlaut : knaw* 1773, 1895 ; ylkane* 1921, 2356, 2543 ; kepe 432, 605 ; kyng* 893, 1246 ; mykyll 2617, 2654, 2933.
   b. *ch* in palatal positions : chese 423 and child, childer regularly.
      Note : O.N. *k* appears as Nth. M.E. *k* in kyrke 1054. (Possibly <O.E. **cyrice**.)
7. O.E. initial palatal *g* is written ȝ or *yh-* :
   a. ȝ : ȝere(s) 164, 2083, etc.
   b. *yh* : yhong(e) 158, 182, etc.
8. The O.E. guttural stop *g* remained : god 20, 42, 66 ; gude 57, etc.
9. O.E. *h* in the combination *h* + *t* appears as follows :
   a. *gh* : bryght* 2002 ; broght* 172, 2062.
   b. *tgh* : rytght 19.
   c. ȝ : noȝt* 89, 124, 153.
   d. *ȝth* : noȝth 98, 165, etc.

10. O.E. *sc* appears in several forms:
    a. Nth. *s* 210 times initially in unstressed words: sall, suld.
    b. Normal *s(s)h*: hys(s)hop(e) 310, 339, 344; fisshers 3200; shame 97, 168, 170; shent 577; worships 2746.
    c. The alternative spelling *sch* appears in the following words, each occurring once: bischope, schere, schrayfe, schryfe, schype.
    d. O.N. *sk*, which is a Nth. characteristic, appears in **skarthes** 2270; and the spelling **skole** 2087 may be an indication of the derivation of the word through O.N. **skoli**.
11. O.E. *hw* appears in three forms:
    a. Nth. (or E. Mid.) *qw* 41 times: qwen 140, 284, 391; qwhen 24, 649, 2159; qwhat 726, 927, 1600.
    b. Mid. *wh* 167 times: what 7, 312, 563; when 508, 524, 724; whare 1076, 1263, 1303.
    c. Sth. *w* five times: war(e) 2880, 2886; wilk 3167; wils 1719; wylke 2323.
12. The personal pronouns are Nth. in form:
    a. Feminine singular, third person: scho 145 times; sho 13 times.
    b. Nominative of the third person plural: þai 396 times; þay twice; and þi once.
    c. Possessive of the third person plural: þer 86 times and occasionally þere and þar(e).
    d. Objective of the third person plural: þam 174 times and occasionally þaim and þaym.
13. Plural substantives have the following endings:
    a. *-es* 244 times: bestes 254, 1063, 1101; clothes 296; frendes 424, 1162, 1174.
    b. *-s* 114 times: damsels 293, 627; dantez̄s (= danteys) 3262; maydens 262, 469, 607; tempils 2831; 2876.
    c. *-ys* 41 times: bestys 2500, 2515; frendys 1661, 1835.
    d. *-n* regularly in children and once in eyn (O.E. **ēagan**) 2002.
    e. *-us* in the following Latin words: *pharaseus* 2173 and *tribus* 485.
    f. The following words of O.F. origin write the pl. *-ts* as *-tz̄*: presantz̄ 2609; rentz̄ 2599; spirytz̄ 3007.
    g. The plural *seruauntes* is sometimes two syllables and sometimes three. It occurs in the following forms:

seruaundeȝs 3314; seruuandȝes 3281; seruandtȝes 3304; seruauntesȝ 3266, 3289.

14. Verbs regularly end in *-es* in the present indicative, second person singular: begynnes 934; haves 152, 674; knawes 127, 866; and as follows in the present indicative, third person singular.
    a. *-es* regularly: comes 92, 441; spekes 2142, 2153; standes 1318.
    b. *-s* in *says* regularly, three times in *bers*, and once in each of the following verbs: begyns, bids, ligs, lys.
    c. *-se* occurs three times: lyse 1805, 2429, 3154.
    d. *-ys* occurs: rynnys 3170; standys 3079; suffys 3173.

15. Verbs regularly have the characteristic Nth. ending *-es* in the pres. ind. pl. The pres. ind. pl. of the anomalous verb **ben** is always the Nth. **er** except for **bes** 2256, and the Nth. contracted forms **has** 1085 and **seys** 2012 occur. **Comys** 1249 is a variant spelling of Nth. **comes**.

16. Present participles of strong verbs have the following endings:
    a. Nth. *-and(e)* 49 times: brynnand 226; walkand 999.
    b. *-yng* four times: plesyng* 1532, shynyng* 1247, spekyng 2587, standyng 1101.

17. Preterit participles of strong verbs regularly end in *-en* and are without prefix: comen 56, 185, 1030; funden 1078; benomen 1031, 1749.

18. Preterit participles of weak verbs end in *-ed* or *-id*: betrayde 415; cursyd 448; sayde 201; wayfed 415; weddid 408.

19. Special forms peculiar to the North: among, emang 368, 479, 485; at (= that) 42, 45, 246, 432, 747, 974, 2358, 3380; bus 810, 1174, 1176; childer 59; gas 161; gudnes 403; helles 99; hende 177, 1031, 1387, 2180; herkens 3, 71; lufed 868; luke 577; tane 929, 1803, 2828; þas 607, 610, 985; thusgate 148, 499, 736, 2461; tyll (= to) 104, 323, 585.

20. The first two hundred lines of the poem contain the following Scandinavian loan-words: at (= that) 42, 45; ay 138, 175; bath 22; bayth 62; boyth 61; boȝth 23; er 72, 84; fell 36, 101; fra 105, 130; fro 120, 152, 172, 185; fyrth 36; gar 176; hende 177; husband 120, 122, 153; yll 154, 168; neke 22; ryn 81; sam 59, 164; sere 93;

skyll 162; slyke 28; thusgate 148; til 110; toke 32; tyll 103; þai 35, 50, 57, 59, 62, 67, 76, 84; þaim 76; þer 68, 72, 178, 180; þithen 103; were (n.) 96, 157.[1] These two hundred lines contain, therefore, twenty-four separate words of Scandinavian origin occurring fifty-three times in an approximate total of 1190 words, or a percentage of 4.7, leaving out of consideration words which may have been influenced by Scandinavian phonology.

This study has shown the following facts concerning the life of St. Anne as it is contained in the Minnesota MS.: the language is predominantly Northern, but contains a considerable Midland element; the poem contains a considerable number of words which are peculiar to the Northern dialect, and must have been in the original version; the Scandinavian element in the language is larger than would be expected in a Midland text, but is not so large as would be expected in a pure Northern text. (No exact statistics are available, and this statement of the case is based on impressions gained from reading in various M.E. dialects.) It will be shown later (p. xxvii) that this version of the poem is a copy of an older original. We may conclude, therefore, that the original version of this poem was a Northern text and that the extant copy was made by a Midland scribe either in the southern part of the Northern territory or in the northern or north-eastern part of the Midland territory.

A shorter version of the life of St. Anne is that in MS. Trinity College, Cambridge, 601. It begins at f. 221*a* and extends through f. 232*b*; it contains ninety-four rime royal stanzas. The MS., which contains poems chiefly by Lydgate, belongs to the time of Edward IV.[2] The writing is clear and contains a surprisingly small number of contractions and peculiarities of orthography. Almost the only contractions used are those for *-er*, which is indicated by a curl above and to the right of the preceding letter, and for *with* which is written *w*^{t}. Aside from the usual prologue of deprecation and supplication, the poem is an exposition of the facts concerning the lives of St. Anne and the Virgin up to and including the birth of Christ. It ends with a prayer to St. Anne.

The following analysis will show that the dialect of this poem is approximately the same as that of Lydgate, whose name has been added at the top of f. 221*a* and at the bottom of f. 222*a* by a hand different

[1] This study is based primarily on the authority of Erik Björkman's *Scandinavian Loan-words in Middle English*, in *Studien zur Englischen Philologie*, VII, 1–191, and XI, 19–360.

[2] See Brown, *op. cit.*, I, 242, and the *Catalogue of Western MSS. in Trinity College, Cambridge*, II, 83, for the date and more detailed description of this MS.

from and later than that in which the MS. is written. (Lydgate's name was probably added by Stowe, to whom the MS. once belonged.)

1. O.E. *ā* regularly appears as *ǭ*, which is the characteristic form for the Midland and Southern dialects: holy 37, 127, 128, 172; more 54, 196, 274, 283; sory* 27, 73; stone 31, 225, 236.

   Exceptions: In the following unaccented positions it appears as *a*: nat 52, 347, 518; notwithstanding, 28, 522.
2. O.E. *a* is lengthened in open syllables to *ā*: make 13, 244; name 211; shame* 59.
3. Merc. *a*, W.S. *ea* + *ld* appears as *ǭ*: manyfolde* 119, 472; old* 29, 118, 177.
4. O.E. *āe* + *r* in adverbs and verbs regularly appears as Midland *ē*: there 233, 329; were 15, 18, 258, 271.
5. O.E. *y*, *ȳ*, appears in two forms:
   a. Nth. or E. Mid. *i*, *ī* (written *y*): fyrst 97; synners 46, 206, 469, 640.
   b. Sth. *u*: furst 381; suche (<O.E. swylc by absorption of *w* and loss of *l*. N.E.D.) 197, 203, 404, 528.
6. O.E. *c* appears as follows:
   a. *k* (sometimes written *c*) generally in guttural positions and before palatal vowels arising from umlaut: come* 171, 251; derk 267; eke 9, 96, 97, 184; kynrede* 242, 293.
   b. *ch* in palatal positions: chose 100, 369; chyrche* 127, 461; chyld 172, 359.

   Exceptions: mykell* 281; moche 289, 399; suche 10, 197, 203; whyche 23, 81, 85, 110, 135.
7. O.E. palatal *g* appears regularly as *y*: yaue 31; yef 35; yefte 338; yeres 327; yeuyng* 131, 226, 266.
8. O.E. guttural stop *g* remained: god 31; good 21.

   Exception: owne (O.E. **āgen**) 45, 198, 246 by diphthongization of *ā* (N.E.D.).
9. O.E. *h* in the combination *ht* appears as *gh*: brought 139, 164; doughter 334; lyght(e)* 3, 266; myghty 243, 271, 274.
10. O.E. *hw* appears as Mid *wh*: what 337; where 18, 40; whom 120.
11. O.E. *sc* regularly appears as *sh*: shall 56, 68, 69; shuld 122, 198, 337; flessh(e) 258, 333; shynyng 294.
12. The third person of the feminine singular pronoun appears only as *she*.

13. The third person of the plural pronoun appears as :
    a. Nom. they 221, 271, 274.
    b. Poss. theyr(e) 204, 205, 226.
    c. Obj. theym 40, 41, 300 ; hem 236, 285, 503, 510.
14. The regular endings of plural substantives are :
    a. *-es*, sometimes written *-ys* : beames 226 ; goodes 321 ; goodys 270 ; storyes 36, 262 ; thornes 299.
    b. *-s* : herts 65 ; moders 195 ; pylgryms 320 ; vergyns 148.
    c. *-n* in brethern 106 and regularly.
15. The present indicative, third person singular, of verbs ends in *-eth* : apereth 107 ; causeth 38 ; ffedeth 167 ; hath 34, 54, 228.
16. The present indicative, third person plural, of verbs appears in two forms :
    a. *-n* ending : byn 88 ; 224, 251 ; shewyn 262.
    b. Without ending : halow 108 ; worshyp 108 ; support 219.
17. Present participles end in *-yng* : bryngyng* 122 ; encresyng 277 ; preysyng 132; yeuyng* 131, 266.
18. Past participles of strong verbs end in *-en* or *-yn* and are without prefix : holdyn 129 ; forsaken 111 ; knowyn 360.

This analysis points unmistakably to the S.E. Midlands as the home of this poem. The language is so similar to that of Lydgate that it is a practical certainty that the MS. belongs to the neighbourhood of Suffolk.[1]

Chetham Library MS. 8009 contains, beginning at f. 19*a*, another copy of the same version of the life of St. Anne as that in Trinity College, Cambridge, 601, although there are slight variations between the two copies. The Chetham Library MS. belongs to the latter half of the fifteenth century.[2] It contains a few more of the usual contractions than Trinity College, Cambridge, 601, and is written with more flourish. The variant readings of this MS. are given with the text from Trinity College, Cambridge, 601. An analysis of the language of the Chetham version follows.

1. O.E. *ā* regularly appears as *ǭ* : holy(e) 37, 83, 127 ; stone 31, 237 ; sore 42, 68, 154 ; two 237 ; wo* 91, 203, 339.

[1] For a discussion of the language of Lydgate see E.E.T.S. 80, 89, 97, and 103.
[2] Cf. Brown, *op. cit.*, I, 454.

2. O.E. *a* appears in two forms:
   a. *ā* in open syllables: lak(e) 9, 17; name 211; scham* 59.
   b. *ō* before a nasal + a voiced consonant: honde* 10; lond* 108; stonde* 214.
3. Merc. *a*, W.S. *ea* + *-ld* regularly appears as *ǭ*: manyfolde* 119, 472; olde* 29, 118, 177.
4. O.E. *aē* + *r* regularly becomes *ē* in adverbs and verbs: therfor(e) 62, 77, 127, 200; wer(e) 15, 18, 33; wherfor 30, 48, 131, 190.
5. O.E. *y*, *ȳ* generally appears as *i*, *ī* (*y*): fyrst 97, 381; sinnarys 46; synnarys 469; synnerys 206.
   Exceptions: letyll (Kentish) 278, 399 and such 197, 203 (O.E. **swylc** by absorption of *w* and loss of *l* (N.E.D.). It may be Sth.
6. O.E. *c* appears in two forms:
   a. *k* in guttural positions and before palatal vowels arising from umlaut: derk 161; eke 9, 96; kepe 53; kynred 242, 394; mekyll 281, 368.
   b. *ch* in palatal positions: besechyng 7; cherche 127, 461; werche 462; which 32, 85, 110.
7. O.E. *g* appears in three forms:
   a. Guttural *g* remained: god, good, gaff 31.
   b. Palatal *g* became *y*: yeff 35; yeuyng 226; yefte 338; yerys 327.
   c. Medial *g* became *w* in *owne* (O.E. **āgen**) 45, 58 by diphthongization of *ā*.
8. O.E. spirant *h* + *t* appears with three spellings:
   a. *gh*: brought(e) 173, 186; nought 60; ryght 8.
   b. ȝ: brouȝte 164, 342; hyȝe 79, 163, 182.
   c. *ȝth*: myȝthi 271, 274; myȝthly 233.
9. O.E. *hw-* regularly appears as Mid. *wh-*: wherfor 13, 30, 48; whom(ȝ) 120, 159, 204; whose 145, 165, 172.
   Exceptions: Nth. *wase* (= whose) 40 and Mid. or Sth. *woso* (= whoso) 449.
10. O.E. *sc-* appears regularly as *sch-*: schall 56, 68, 69; schene 232, 367; schulde 122, 188, 337; worschipe 108, 192.
    Exceptions: fleche 258, 333; flesshly 121.
11. The third person singular of the feminine pronoun appears only as *sche*.

12. The third person plural of the personal pronoun appears as follows:
    a. Nom. they 221, 271, 274, 278.
    b. Poss. ther (per) 204, 205, 226, 280.
    c. Obj. hem. regularly; them 285, 306.
13. Plural substantives regularly end as follows:
    a. *-es* or *-ys*: angellys 116, 167; branches 158; costes 146; flowrys 142, 143, 150; wallys 237.
    b. *-s*: prophetts 118; sayntts 115; wytts 34.
    c. *-n*: brethern 106, 212.
14. The present indicative, third person singular, of verbs ends in *-eth*: causeth 38; cometh 29; ffedeth 167.
15. The present indicative, third person plural, of verbs ends in *-e*: beleve 252; bene 150, 224; supporte 219; worschipe 108; but shewith 262.
16. Present participles end in *-ynġ*: abydyng 104, 209; puttyng 42; submittyng 94; unconnyng 95.
17. Past participles of strong verbs end in *-yn*: forsakyn 111; holdyn 129.

The foregoing analysis shows the language of this poem to be closely related to that of the Trinity College, Cambridge, 601 version, but it also shows certain important variations. The regular occurrence of *sch* instead of *sh* from O.E. *sc*, the use of *sche* instead of *she* for the third person feminine of the personal pronoun, and the *-e* instead of the *-n* ending of the present indicative, third person plural, of verbs indicate that this is a more northern text than the Trinity College, Cambridge. It is not, however, a Northern text, for the O.E. *ā* always appears as *ǭ*, O.E. *y* appears as *e* in *letyll* (278, 1399), *hem* is the more common objective form of the third person pl. of the pronoun, and the present participle ends in *-yng*. This text, therefore, must belong to that part of the E. Midlands where certain Northern forms occur regularly. It is probably an E. Midland copy of a S.E. Midland original. The distinctive variations recorded in the collations with the text from Trinity College, Camb., 601, indicate, however, that this is not a direct copy of the Trinity College, Cambridge, version, but that both are copies from an unknown original written in the S.E. Midlands.

The best version of the third stanzaic form of the life of St. Anne is ound in MS. Bodl. 10234 (Tanner 407), which also belongs to the fifteenth century.[1] The poem begins at f. 21*a* and contains 115 stanzas of four

[1] Cf. Brown, *op. cit.*, I, 96.

long lines each riming abab. The scribe's use of contractions is confined largely to the omission of the vowel in *with*, the use of a back stroke over a final consonant to indicate the addition of a final *-e*, and the writing of a curled stroke above and to the right of a consonant for the addition of *-er*. A distinct peculiarity of this MS. appears in a series of dots similar to periods in modern punctuation. Sometimes they appear in the middle of a line, sometimes at the end of a line, and sometimes at the end of a stanza. For the sake of reproducing this interesting peculiarity, I have transcribed the poem without adding further punctuation. I have also retained the capitalization of the MS.

The following analysis of the language of this version shows several inconsistencies in dialect.

1. O.E. *ā* regularly appears as *ǭ*: hom(e) 181, 183, 200; ston(e)* 225, 293; tokene 185, 339.
   Exception in unaccented word: na 270.
2. O.E. *a* appears in two forms:
   a. *ā* in open syllables: name* 9, 11, 22; same 211; schame 114, 388.
   b. *ǭ* before a nasal + voiced consonant: hond(e)* 212, 317, 318; lombe* 108; lond* 301, 395.
3. Merc. *a*, W.S. *ea* + *-ld* appears as *ǭ*: bold* 256; holde 358; olde 149, 219; told 191, 192.
4. O.E. *ǣ* + *r* in adverbs and verbs regularly appears as *ē*: ther(e) 194, 201, 224; wer(e) 78, 96, 110; wher 191.
5. O.E. *y*, *ȳ* appears in two forms:
   a. *i*, *ī* (written *y*): fyrst 10, 27; kynde* 150; lytel 139, 311; mankynde 128; swyche 230, 370; synne 272.
   b. *e*: mankende 131; meche 201, 369; merthe 201; sweche 230; weche 120, etc.
6. O.E. *c* appears in two forms:
   a. *k* in guttural positions and before palatal vowels arising from umlaut generally: boke 34, 70, 80; derk 248; kome 213 (come also appears); kynred 74; mekyl 91.
   b. *ch* in palatal positions generally: chyld* 15, 17, 22; chyrche 84; swych(e) 348, 370.
   Note: O.E. *c* is not palatalized to *ch* in *mekyl* 91 but is in *mechyl* 356 and *meche* 201, 369. O.N. *k* remains in *kyrk* 244.

7. O.E. palatal *g* appears in two forms :
   a. ȝ regularly : aȝen 65, 143, 247 ; ȝe(e)r(e)* 56, 93, 217 ; ȝyf 1, 95, 133 ; ȝong 228, 230, 371.
   b. *g* : gate* 186, 193.
   Note : the *g* appears as *w* in *morwen* 244 by labialization and in *owyn* 89, 133, 176 by diphthongization of *ā*.
8. O.E. spirant *h* + *t* appears with two spellings :
   a. *-gh* : hyght 49, 61 ; myght* 17, 18, 95 ; nyght* 20 ; ryght 13, 159, 249 ; thurgh 177.
   b. *-th* : bryth* 231 ; brouth 53, 147, 250 ; nouth 105, 114, 125.
   Note : the spirant *h* disappears in *dowter(ys)* 8, 33, 54, 439, leaving a trace of its influence in the diphthong *ow*.
9. O.E. *hw-* appears in three forms :
   a. *wh-* regularly : whan 103, 117, 213 ; what 65, 68, 110 ; who 57, 59, 68 ; whom 66, 452.
   b. *qw-* : qwan 243 ; qwat 263, 265, 312, 407, 418 ; qwom 324 ; qwose 320 ; qwy 285, 342.
   c. *w-* : weche 120, 236, 346.
10. O.E. *sc* regularly appears as *sch* : byschopis 257 ; schall 119, 139, 163 ; schame 114, 388 ; schuld 20, 91, 95.
    Exceptions : bysshopys 254, 279, 281, 293, 299 ; fleysshlly 129 ; flexly 138 ; freyssh 215, 443 ; worchepe 56, 212 ; wurchepe 35 ; wurchepful 72.
11. The third person singular of the feminine pronoun appears regularly as *sche* ; but *she* appears in 34, 50, 196, 237.
12. The third person plural of the personal pronoun appears as follows :
    a. Nom. they, þei, þey indiscriminately, though the spelling they is slightly predominant.
    b. Poss. her(e) regularly except there 199.
    c. Obj. hem always.
13. Plural substantives have four endings :
    a. *-ys* is the prevailing form : bokys 156, 207 ; dowterys 8, 54 ; frendys 102, 182, 214 ; pasys 224, 228.
    b. *-es* occurs frequently : almes 85 ; dayes 36, 78, 126 ; ryches 81, 82.
    c. *-s* occurs frequently : days 87 ; housbonds 28, 50 ; tonggs 3 ; tydynggs 122.
    d. *-yn* : chylderyn 8, 38, 58 ; drynkyn 259.

14. The present indicative, third person singular, of verbs regularly ends in *-yth*: beryth 70; byddyth 314; chargyth 314; makyth 184.

    Exceptions: sayes 34, 80, 168; tellys 67, 261.

15. The present indicative, third person plural, of verbs regularly ends in *-n*: answeryn 377; ben 86, 161, 320; han 88, 129, 141, 144; mowen 63, 162, 318; seyn 42, 164, 223.

    Exceptions: be 224; beryth 127; come 146; tel 156, 202, 436; wene 130.

16. Present participles of verbs end in *-ynq*: levyng 36; weuyng 246; passyng 428.

17. Preterit participles of strong verbs end in *-yn*: getyn 33, 105, 402; helpyn 304; knowyn 367; wretyn 38, 70, 167.

The foregoing analysis shows that this text is predominantly Midland in dialect; and the occurrence of O.E. *sc-* as *sch-* and as *x*, of the personal pronouns *sche* and *þei*, and of O.E. *hw-* as *qw-* indicates that it belongs to the N.E. Midlands. There are, however, certain forms which must be of Northern origin: O.E. *c* (k) occurs as *k* in *kome*, *kyrk*, etc.; and O.E. *hw-* survives as *qw-*. On the other hand, there are certain Southern or S. Midland characteristics: O.E. *y*, *ȳ* becomes *e*, *ē* in several instances; and *hem* occurs regularly; the present indicative, third person singular, of verbs regularly ends in *-yth* and the corresponding plural in *-n*. But the *e*, *ē* from O.E. *y*, *ȳ* is distinctly Kentish. We must conclude, therefore, that the original of this version is of Northern provenience, that this original was copied in the dialect of London, and that the present text was made in the N.E. Midlands from the London copy.

Another copy of this four-line stanzaic version of the life of St. Anne is contained in MS. Harley 4012 at f. 130*b*. It also is a product of the fifteenth century.[1] It is written with considerable flourish and decoration, but contains no significant peculiarities of composition or orthography. Wherever the reading of this MS. varies from that of Bodl. 10234 the variant readings are given with the Bodl. text.

The following analysis of the dialect of the Harley MS. version will show that the language is slightly different from that of the Bodl. MS. version.

[1] Brown, *op. cit.*, I, 339.

1. O.E. *ā* appears as *ǭ*: home 181, 336; holigost* 177, 320; one 50, 51, 52; token 185, 307, 339; too* (numeral) 47, 172, 432.

2. O.E. *a* occurs in two forms:
   a. *ā* in open syllables: name* 9, 22, 42; same 211, 445; shame 114, 388.
   b. *ą̄* before a nasal + voiced consonant: honde* 212, 329 (hande 318), londe* 301, 395; sonde* 210.

3. Merc. *a*, W.S. *ea* + *-ld* appears as *ō*: bolde* 256; holde 358; tolde 191,206; wolde (N.E. **old**) 149, 151, 219.

4. O.E. *āe* + *r* in adverbs and verbs regularly becomes *ē*: þer 15, 115, 194; wer(e) 13, 19, 52; wher 68, 103, 191.

5. O.E. *y*, *ȳ* regularly appears as *i*, *ī*: first 10, 27; liste* 46; mankinde 76; synne 240, 272.
   Exceptions: moche 12, 91, etc.; suche 230, 348, 370.

6. O.E. *c* appears as follows:
   a. *k* generally in guttural positions and before palatal vowels arising from umlaut: derke 248; kallid 34, 44, 74; kam(me) 103, 199, 213; kowde 12, 110.
   b. *ch* generally in palatal positions: children 38, 112; chulde 51; suche 230, 348, 370.
   Exceptions: *k* remains in O.N. *kirk** 242 but is palatalized to *ch* in *cherch(e)* 84, 98. O.E. *c* appears as *k* in *wirk* 242 but is palatalized to *ch* in *eche* 51, 244 and in *moche* 12, 91, 142, 369.

7. O.E. palatal *g* regularly appears as *y*(ȝ): yeate 193; ȝeate 186; ȝeris 78, 126; yode 101; yofen 33; younge 228, 315, 326, 371.
   Exceptions: awne 133, 160 by diphthongization of *ā*.

8. O.E. spirant *h* + *t* appears as *gh*: broght 53, 250; doghter 33, 439; myght* 18, 95; right* 136, 240.

9. O.E. *hw-* regularly appears as *wh-*: what 110, 302, 390; when 103, 117; which(e) 75, 120; but *hoo* (N.E. *who*) 57, 59, 153.

10. O.E. *sc-* appears as *sh-*: bisshoppis 254, 257, 293; flesh 443; shall 5, 26, 119; shame 114; short 21.

11. The third person singular of the feminine pronoun is always *she*.

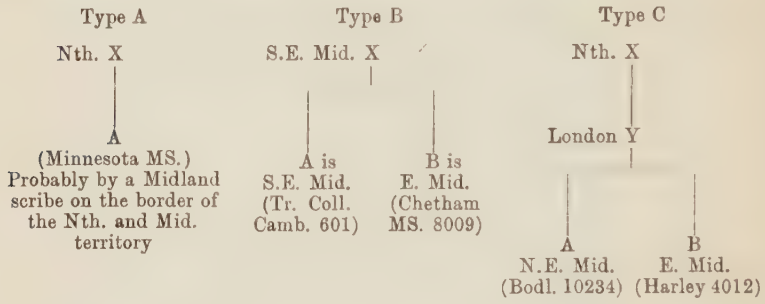
12. The third person plural of the personal pronoun appears as follows:
    a. Nom. þei (occasionally þey, they) 13, 14, 17, 19.
    b. Poss. þer 14, 82, 83, 89.
    c. Obj. þem 33, 43, 99.
13. Plural substantives have five different endings:
    a. *-es* most frequently: daes 36, 78; frendes 1; husbondes 50; trifelles 3.
    b. *-is* almost as frequently as *-es*: husbondis 7, 28; frendis 102; seruauntis 90.
    c. *-s* occurs occasionally: doghters 8, 54.
    d. *-n*: childern(e) 8, 47, 54.
    e. *-us*: almus 85.
14. The present indicative, third person singular, of verbs regularly ends in *-ith*: berith 70; biddith 314; knawith 407; makith 184.
    Exceptions: sa(i)es 34, 80, 168; tellis 67, 261.
15. The present indicative, third person plural, of verbs regularly ends in *-ith*: berith 127; makith 55; saith 223; telliþe 378.
    Exceptions: haue 141, 162; sayne 225; telle 202, 436; wene 130.
16. Present participles of strong verbs end in *-yng*: ffulfillyng 86; leuyng 36; walkyng 195; sitting 123.
17. Preterit participles of strong verbs end in *en*: knawen 367; writen 38; yofen 33; gotyn 106, 402.

Since this text retains certain of the Northern and Kentish characteristics of the Bodl. text; has *þei*, *þer*, *þem* regularly for the third person of the plural pronoun; has the *-ith* ending for both the singular and the plural of verbs in the third person, present indicative; and has the present participle in *-yng*, we may safely conclude that it is an E. Midland version of the same provenience as the N.E. Midland version contained in the Bodl. MS.

That the Harley 4012 copy is a variant version rather than a copy of the Bodl. version is indicated by the great variation in the use of pronouns, by the difference in form of the plural indicative of verbs, by the fact that the two MSS. have only this poem in common, and by the further fact that the Bodl. copy was definitely made for the purpose of celebrating St. Anne's Day while the Harleian copy as definitely was not. A copyist

would undoubtedly make certain changes in the form of words in order to bring these words into accord with the usage of his own dialect, but it is highly improbable that he would make changes as radical and consistent as those which appear in the Harleian copy. The evidence, therefore, indicates that the two copies are from a common original.

On a basis of the preceding studies, the versions of the life of St. Anne which are under consideration may be classified as follows:



III. Authorship and Sources.

While it is in every case impossible to determine the authorship of these stanzaic versions of the life of St. Anne, there are certain facts concerning the occasion and relationships of these poems which can be stated with a fair degree of certainty. The sources of the poems also, whenever they are at all definite, can be determined with comparative certainty. It is to these problems that this section is devoted.

The version of the life of St. Anne contained in the Minnesota MS. is written by the same scribe who wrote the remainder of the MS. The identity of this scribe, however, has not been determined. The only clue to his identity—if such it is—is to be found at the bottom of f. 185*a*. Here is written, in the same hand that wrote the entire MS., Nomen *scr*iptoris R.G. plenus amoris. Ecce quam bonu*m* et qua*m* Iocu*n*du*m* ha*b*itare frat*res* i*n* unu*m*.[1] The R.G. may be the initials of the scribe. If they are, the quotation would imply that he belonged to a monastery. They may, on the other hand, be the initials of the author, as Professor Gerould surmises, or even of Robert de Gretham, whose *Miroir* (*Les Euangiles des*

[1] The quotation is from *Liber Psalmorum* 132 : 1. I read R.G. and not R.S. as does Professor Gerould, who thinks that these may be the initials of the R. Stoundone of Cambridge University MS. Dd. I. 1. (Cf Gerould. G. H., *Saints' Legends*, p. 169.) I should hesitate to disagree with so distinguished a scholar as Professor Gerould had not my reading been concurred in by experienced scholars to whom I have shown these initials.

Domees) may have been the model for the *North English Homily Collection*.[1] However that may be, the scribe was hardly the author, for this is not the original version of the poem. This fact is evidenced by such scribal errors as the writing of *Joseph* for *Jesus* at l. 2671 and the omission of three verses from each of six different stanzas of the poem. The problem of the authorship of this poem, therefore, must for the present remain unsettled.

The source of the poem is not difficult to determine. In the first stanza the author says that his "lytill tretice" follows the story

Of anna & hyr doghter dere,
  Mary þat maydyn fre,
How scho was born & in what land,
Als seynt mathew yt wretyn fand
  In grew & þerfor he
Made it in latyn out of grewe
Als seynt Ierom þe doctour trew
  Witnes it suld be.

This corresponds closely with the heading of the apocryphal Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew in codex A (Vaticani Codicis), which reads as follows: *Incipit Liber de ortu Beatae Mariae et Infantia Salvatoris a Beato Matthaeo Evangelista Hebraice in Latinum translatus.*[2] Then, near the end of the poem (ll. 3413 ff.), the author declares that he has recorded the story

Als saynt Iohn euangelyst it wrate,
  For next hym best he couth.
  . . . . .
Bot saynt mathew eftyrward wele & fyn
Out of grew turnyd yt in latyn
  & had þus in doyng,
At þe prayer of byshoppes two,
Cromassij and Elydon called þai so,
  Twa gude men of lyfyng.
& for all þis 3yt es þer some
Þat says it es apocrysome
  & none autentyk thyng.

This in turn corresponds with the same Pseudo-Matthew in codex B (Codicis Laurentiani), which states that *Sanctus apostolus et evangelista Iohannes manu sua scripsit hunc libellum hebraicis litteris consignatum, quem Ieronimus doctor ille perspicuus de hebraico in latinum deduxit.*[3] The source of the poem, therefore, is the Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew.

[1] Cf. Gerould, *op. cit.*, p. 168.
[2] Tischendorf, C., *Evangelia Apocrypha*, p. 51.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 112.

An examination of the text shows, however, that the author did not follow the apocryphal codex A, but codex B, which contains a larger proportion of miraculous material. But even this version he did not follow "fro sentence to sentence" beyond a certain point, if we assume that the author was using one of the extant versions of the Pseudo-Matthew—an assumption which is unwarranted in view of our present knowledge of the large fund of biblical and hagiographical lore available in the ancient seats of learning.[1] In ll. 1837–2076 are recorded events which do not occur in any of the various extant versions of the Pseudo-Matthew printed by Tischendorf. The same thing is true of ll. 2377–2940, where the author inserts legends from Jacobus de Voragine's *Legenda Aurea*, Peter Comestor's *Historia Scholastica*, and others for which I have found no source. Again, in ll. 2989–3408, he recounts certain miracles from the canonical Gospels of Matthew and Luke.[2]

[1] See, for example, the *Catalogi Veteres Librorum Ecclesiae Cathedralis Dunelmensis* in the *Publications of the Surtees Society*, VII, 54–58.

[2] For convenience, I give below a tabular view of the more important differences between the A and B versions of the Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew as printed by Tischendorf in his *Evangelia Apocrypha*. The life of St. Anne follows the B version in these cases. Detailed differences will be given in the notes to the text of the poem.

Chap.	A Version.	B Version.
II.	Joachim's offering is refused by Reubin.	Refused by Ysachar.
IV.	The birth of Mary and her consecration in the temple.	Gives the additional incident of Mary ascending the fifteen steps of the temple unaided.
VII.	Mary refuses to marry when she is 14 years old.	Mary is 12 years old.
VIII.	A dove ascends from Joseph's rod as a sign that he is to marry Mary.	Joseph's rod flowers and bears nuts.
IX.	The Annunciation "iuxta fontem."	The Annunciation in the "habitationem" of Mary.
XVI.	The coming of the Magi. No names are given.	The names of the Magi are Guaspar, Melchior, and Balthasar.
XXII.	Joseph and Mary, upon their arrival in Egypt, lodge in the temple at Sotinen.	They lodge in the house of a widow at Sotrina, where Jesus restores a dead child to life.
XXVI.	The miracle of the lake and the restoration of the dead boy.	Only the first part of the miracle is given.
XXX.	Zachyas advises that Jesus be sent to school.	Combines A version XXX, XXXI, and XXXVIII.
XXXI.	Zachyas becomes the teacher of Jesus and is put to shame by the wisdom of the Child.	A friend of Joseph becomes the teacher of Jesus and is surprised at the wisdom of the Child.
XXXIII.	Mary sends Jesus to the well. He performs the miracle of the broken pitcher.	Mary sends a maid for the water. Jesus performs the miracle of the broken pitcher.

Although the author of this version of the life of St. Anne, like Osbern Bokenham in his life of Anna,[1] may have been following a compilation unknown to us, it is evident that he was no slavish copyist. It is also evident that the principal source of his poem is the B version of the Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew and that this is one of the many poems produced for the purpose of furnishing entertaining religious instruction.

There is nothing to suggest the identity of the author of the rime royal version of the life of St. Anne contained in MS. Trinity College, Cambridge, 601. Lydgate's name, it is true, appears at f. 221*a* and again at f. 222*a*; but this name is written in a later hand than that in which the poem is written. Moreover, Professor MacCracken excludes this poem from the Lydgate canon because it breaks "all Lydgate's rhyming habits, while closely imitating his general style" and because, he thinks, "it is of a later date than Lydgate."[2] While the ascription of the poem to Lydgate might not be denied conclusively on account of date, Professor MacCracken's rime tests seem definitely to exclude it from the Lydgate canon and to leave the problem of its authorship unsettled.

Although the authorship of this poem remains a mystery, the occasion for which it was written is certain. In ll. 247 ff. the author says:

Thys day, dere brethern, most specyally
In hono*ur* of thys matrone ferre and nere,
Most worshipfull and blessyd entyerly,
As we haue seyde before, now *ver*yly
And in thys day togyder we byn come.

XXXIV. The miracle of the wheat.	The miracle of the wheat and of the healing of James Alpheus, who was bitten by a serpent.
XXXV. The miracle of Jesus and the lioness.	Not in the B version.
XXXVI. Jesus parts the waters and crosses the Jordan.	Not in the B version.
XXXVII. Jesus lengthens the beam for Joseph.	Jesus lengthens the beam for "quidam architector lignifaber." Jesus surprises his playmates by leaping on a sunbeam.
XXXVIII. Jesus is sent to school a second time.	Given under XXX in the B version.
XXXIX. Jesus teaches his schoolmaster.	Given under XXXI in the B version.
XLII. The banquet of Joseph and his sons.	The death of Joseph and the account of Anne's three husbands and her children.

[1] *Englische Studien*, XII, 34.

[2] MacCracken, H. N., *The Minor Poems of John Lydgate*, London, 1911, I, xxxix and xl.

And in ll. 642 ff. he says :

> And to vs all worshippyng in what place
> Of thys same day and the gret solempnyte
> She bryngeth grace of hyr benygnyte.

Since the title of the poem reads " Incipit Vita Sancte Anne matris Sancte Marie Virginis," there is only one day to which the poem would be appropriate. " Thys day " must be St. Anne's Day (July 26), and the poem must have been written for the celebration of the Feast of St. Anne. In view of the fact that this poem shows a marked similarity to the works of Lydgate, to whose locality the MS. certainly belongs, it appears more than probable that the poem was written, or at least copied, for the celebration of the annual festival of the St. Anne's Guild of Bury St. Edmunds, where such a guild flourished after about 1309.[1]

The source of this poem is not so definite as of that contained in the Minnesota MS. The prologue contains the typical apology of the medieval clerk for his lack of ability; it also contains something more. The author apologizes not only for his lack of ability but also for the offence which he may give. He addresses himself to " ye cruell herts mercyless " and admonishes them that " man witout mercy mercy shall mys." The burden of this prologue is a plea for pity and mercy. Whether such a plea has any reference to contemporary events I am unable to say, for it contains no specific references. It is possible, however, that the author had in mind such events as those following Jack Cade's Rebellion and the slaughter of citizens, both innocent and guilty, attending the accession of Edward IV to the throne.[2] There is no reference to these affairs beyond the prologue, although the author dwells upon the mercy and pity of God and of St. Anne. In doing this he seems to have followed the general outline of the Gospel of the Nativity of Mary, which was attributed to St. Matthew. There are also evidences that the poet was familiar with the *Legenda Aurea*, Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew, and the canonical scriptures.[3] The items taken from these sources are interspersed with the author's comments and explanations, thereby giving an appearance of originality to the poem which renders the location of the definite source more difficult than would otherwise be the case.

[1] Cf. Westlake, *op. cit.*, p. 226.

[2] Cf. Gardner, S. R., *A Student's History of England*, London, 1911, I, 322–337.

[3] The sources of the various parts of the poem, in so far as I have been able to determine them, are indicated in the notes to the text. The problem of originality will be discussed in connection with the Chetham MS.

A variant of this version of the life of St. Anne is to be found in Chetham Library MS. 8009 at f. 19*a*. There is, however, considerable variation between the two poems, both in phraseology and in dialect. In general, wherever differences in phraseology occur, the reading of the Trinity College MS. is preferable. This fact may be illustrated by the following passages :

	Trinity College MS.	Chetham Society MS.
1.	To let I wyll nat whatsoeu*er* befall; I wyll kepe forth my p*ur*pose as I ment.	To let I wyll not what so be falle; I wyll kepe forth myne entent.
2.	O p*er*fyte charyte whyche art w*i*touten pere.	A parfet man which whith ou3te arte pere.
3.	Ffor all v*er*tues byn groundyd apon the.	For all rownd are gronddyd on the.
4.	Of bethlem, forsoth, that nobyll cyte Of Dauid, Anne ys gone out sycurly.	Off bethlem, forsoth, þ*at* noble cyte Off Anne, dauyth ys gonne ou3te sekyrly.

The reading of the Chetham MS. version in the last instance cited is probably a case of accidental transposition by a careless scribe, for it does not accord with the reading of any possible source material that I have been able to find. The reading of the Trinity College MS. is preferable moreover, on account of both sense and meter, as the lines just quoted and the variants recorded in the collations will illustrate. That the two versions are as different in dialect as in phraseology has been shown already.

If either of these versions had been copied from the other, it is quite likely that the two poems would show a greater similarity in both phraseology and dialect, for the differences between the two do not appear to be the result of careless copying. Additional evidence against the one having been copied from the other appears in the fact that this is the only piece which the two MSS. have in common.[1] This evidence points to a common original for these two poems and supports the dialectal evidence already deduced. The home of this original has already been shown to have been the S.E. Midlands, but its authorship and definite location remain undetermined.

[1] Cf. Brown, *op. cit.*, I, 96 and 454.

The third type of the stanzaic life of St. Anne is contained in MS. Bodl. 10234 (Tanner 407) at f. 21*a*. This MS. is a Commonplace Book compiled by Robert Reynys, a churchwarden of Accle, toward the end of the fifteenth century.[1] Accle, or Acle, is situated in East Norfolk, a fact of importance in locating the home of the poem. While it is extremely improbable that Reynys, who was probably a carpenter, wrote the poem, it is certain that the dialect of the poem is N.E. Midland. It is also certain that this poem was produced for the celebration of the Feast of St. Anne. Evidence for this statement is to be found in ll. 53 ff., which read as follows:

> Now blyssyd be sent anne þat brouth forth þis berth
> and blyssyd be these dowterys and her chylderyn infere;
> and blyssyd be all tho þat make onest merth
> in the worchepe of sent anne in thys tyme of ȝeere.

The occasion for which the poem was produced is even more definitely set forth in the two final stanzas, save one:

> Now blyssyd be þis barne þat born was of a mayde
> and blyssyd be this maydyn þat brouth forth þis berth
> and blyssyd be sent anne her moder as men saye
> in the worchep of whom we make alle oure merth
>
> And mary and her moder maynteth this gylde
> to þe worchep of god and of his plesaunce
> and all þat it mayntene it be it man or chylde
> god of his hey grace ȝeue hem good chaunce.

These stanzas indicate that the poem was written for the annual festival of a St. Anne's Guild and that it was read on St. Anne's Day. Whether the parish church at Accle had such a guild I have been unable to discover. The nearest one recorded by Westlake (*op cit.*, p. 197) was at Lynn. He has recorded only those guilds, however, which afford the best types of parochial guilds or are some variation from the type; consequently his failure to record such a guild in the Hundred of South Walsham, in which Accle is situated, is no evidence that such a guild did not exist there.[2]

[1] Calderhead, Iris G., "Morality Fragments from Norfolk," *Modern Philology*, XIV, 1–9.

[2] Cf. Westlake, *op. cit.*, p. vi. I have not been able to examine Blomefield's *History of the County of Norfolk*. Miss Julia M. Maynard, who has examined the index of the copy of Blomefield in the Harvard Library writes me as follows: "Casual inspection of the index reveals no mention of Robert Reynys, nor do I find

The source of this poem seems to be the *Legenda Aurea*, Chap. CXXXI: "De Nativitate beatae Mariae Virginis," which it follows closely throughout.[1]

MS. Harley 4012, f. 130*b*, contains a poor copy, as has been indicated on p. xxv, from the same original from which the Bodleian version of the life of St. Anne was made. That the Harleian version is a copy is indicated by the dialect and by the omission of verses at ll. 23, 207, 412, 424, and 454; by such scribal errors as the writing of *boye or knaue* for *mayde or knaue* at l. 19; and by the many variant readings which are listed in the collations of this study. A rather interesting example of the carelessness, or ignorance, of the scribe who made this copy is shown in his rendering of ll. 221–22. In the Bodleian version these lines stand as follows:

> On to þe grete temple of jerusalem
> þat semely is set on hey as j wene.

Harley MS. has

> Vnto þe tempell of Iersalem
> þat semely is set on his ass as I wene.

Furthermore, the fact that this is a version which was not intended for a guild celebration of the Feast of St. Anne is shown by the rather hopeless attempt of the scribe to recast ll. 453–457 so as to omit the reference to the guild—an attempt which he abandoned after writing two verses of the stanza.

There are, then, three types of the stanzaic versions of the life of St. Anne which are different in origin, in structure, in dialect, and in authorship. The long version, following the apocryphal Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew, is written in twelve-line stanzas and was probably intended for religious instruction—possibly it was read as a homily on St. Anne's Day. The rime royal version, which seems to follow the apocryphal Gospel of the Nativity, was certainly written for the celebration of the Feast of St. Anne, probably for the St. Anne's Guild at Bury St. Edmunds and for a similar guild in the E. Midlands. And the four-line stanzaic version, based on the *Legenda Aurea*, was written also for the celebration of the Feast of St. Anne by a St. Anne's

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any Saint Anne's Guild whatever—though there are numerous other saints." But she notes the following comment of the librarian under date of 1854: "The Indexes not to be depended on either as to accuracy of reference or completeness." Miss Calderhead's discoveries verify this comment.

[1] Tho. Graesse, 3rd Ed., 1890, pp. 585–590.

Guild. In all, five MSS., none of which is the original version, are extant; but the authorship of all three poems, contained in five MSS., remains undetermined.

IV. Influences.

We may now ask whether any significance can be attached to the stanzaic versions of the life of St. Anne beyond the interest inherent in the poems and in their exemplification of the continued interest in the theme with which they deal. This inquiry leads naturally to a study of the relation of these poems to other Middle English literary productions which can be dated subsequent to the beginning of the fifteenth century. In such a study of relationships, one inevitably comes to the dramatic cycles, that considerable body of fifteenth-century literature which was compiled for popular consumption and edification. Such a study, however, reveals no relation between these poems and the *York*, *Chester*, or *Towneley* cycles of plays; but it does reveal what is apparently an important influence of one of these poems on the *Ludus Coventriae*, or *Hegge Plays*.

A comparative study of the Minnesota MS. version of the life of St. Anne and the *Ludus Coventriae* almost forces one to the conclusion that the life of St. Anne is the source of that group of plays in the *Ludus Coventriae* cycle which deals with the life of the Virgin from her conception to the birth of Christ, with the exception of the *Visit to Elizabeth*. This conclusion is induced by the relative dates of the two compositions, by the probability of the origin of the *Ludus Coventriae* in the N.E. Midlands, by dialectal similarities, by the peculiar history of the Virgin plays, and by convincing resemblances in content, phraseology, and rime words.

It has been shown already that the extant copy of the life of St. Anne, as it is found in the Minnesota MS., is not later than the first quarter of the fifteenth century and that it may belong to the last quarter of the fourteenth. Since the *Ludus Coventriae* belongs to the third quarter of the fifteenth century, there remains no question of the possibility of the use of the St. Anne material as a source by the author of the plays. Even if the Virgin plays constitute an older cycle which was incorporated into the *Ludus Coventriae*, as they probably do,[1] the life of St. Anne was composed early enough to permit of its use

[1] Block, K. S., *Ludus Coventriae or The Plaie Called Corpus Christi*, London, 1922 (E.E.T.S., Extra Series, cxx), p. xx.

half a century before the compilation of the *Ludus Coventriae* cycle as we now have it.

The relative dates of these two compositions would have no significance, however, so far as the possible relationship between the two is concerned, were it not for the fact that the *Ludus Coventriae* devotes so many scenes to St. Anne, the Virgin, and the childhood of Christ. But the cycle is peculiar in this respect; and this peculiarity has led Chambers to suggest that the cycle was performed on St. Anne's Day rather than at Corpus Christi.[1] Professor Hardin Craig has championed this suggestion and has urged Lincoln as the home of the cycle. "I wish," he says, "to make the last [Chambers'] suggestion much more definitely, having arrived at considerable certainty with regard to it from other points of view. There are, I think, good reasons for fixing upon Lincoln as the home of these plays. The somewhat scanty records of the Lincoln plays seem to point to a Corpus Christi play which was transferred to St. Anne's day, and acted regularly as a St. Anne's play until near the middle of the sixteenth century. It was apparently an ordinary cyclic play with certain features appropriate to St. Anne's day. The so-called Coventry cycle, or to use the name of a former owner of the manuscript, the Hegge cycle, is unique in the possession of a group of plays dealing with the nativity and childhood of the Virgin Mary, a subject of unmistakable connection with St. Anne's day. The Corporation records show that each Lincoln alderman was required to furnish a silk gown for one of the 'kings' in the procession of St. Anne. . . .

"The suggestion that the plays belonged to Lincoln has been made before, and there are apparent agreements in the matter of dialect and content with what we should expect to find there. The hypothesis explains at a glance many of the perplexities and problems which have involved the cycle. In fact it would be so rare to find in any other place such a set of conditions as those of Lincoln that the identification must gain in credibility the more it is considered. Lincoln was a great ecclesiastical centre, and at that place we have a close and intimate connection between the cathedral clergy and the town plays, a set of circumstances which exactly accounts for the remarkable homiletic and apocryphal interest of the Hegge cycle."[2]

This theory is supported, in part, by scholars who assign the dialect

[1] Chambers, E. K., *The Mediaeval Stage*, Oxford, 1903, ii, 126-127, 421.
[2] *University of Minnesota Studies in Language and Literature*, I, 75, 76, 81.

of the *Ludus Coventriae* to the N.E. Midlands.[1] And if the N.E. Midlands was the home of the cycle, a knowledge of the life of St. Anne by the author of the plays is brought within the realm of possibility, for it has already been shown that the Minnesota version of the life of St. Anne, in its extant form, was made from a Northern original by a Midland scribe, either in the southern part of the Northern territory or in the N.E. part of the Midland territory. This possibility becomes more convincing as one repeatedly finds in the cycle such Northern forms as *lare*, *same*, *gan*, *knawe*, *thare*, and present participles in *-ande*. A study of these forms has led Professor Greg to conclude: "If we eliminate the Visit to Elizabeth and the Assumption the proportion of northern to southern forms actually established by rime is three to four."[2] Furthermore, Miss Block, the latest editor of the cycle, finds evidence that the manuscript has been worked over "for the purpose of removing archaic or dialectal (Northern) forms: *selkowth*〉, *mervelus*, *shene*〉 *bright*, *carpynge*〉 *spekyng*, *barne*〉 *child*, *bale*〉, *sorow*, *buske*〉 *go*, *tholyn*〉 *suffer*, . . . *beth*〉 *be*, *euy*〉 *heuy*, *dede*〉 *dyde*, *fende*〉 *fynde*, *glathe*〉 *gladd*, *thei*〉 *they*, *perysche*〉 *pers*, *blysse*〉 *comfort*," etc. The most important changes, moreover, have been made in the plays of *Cain and Abel*, *Mary in the Temple*, *Trial of Joseph and Mary*, *Birth of Christ*, *Purification*, *Shepherds*, *Visit of the Magi*, *Harrowing of Hell*, and *Three Maries*, several of which fall within the group apparently showing the influence of the life of St. Anne.[3] It is a significant fact that many of these words which have been changed occur several times in the Minnesota MS. version of the life of St. Anne, and all of the changes are exactly those which a Midland scribe using Northern material would be expected to make. The language of the *Ludus Coventriae*, therefore, is not far removed from the language of the Minnesota MS. version of the life of St. Anne. In fact, all the linguistic evidence points toward the probable use of the life of St. Anne as the source of the Virgin group of the *Ludus Coventriae*.

The conclusion drawn from the linguistic evidence is supported by the two most recent studies of the composition of the cycle—that of Miss Esther L. Swenson[4] and that of Miss K. S. Block. Although these

[1] Ten Brink, *English Literature*, II, 283; M. Kramer, *Sprache und Heimat des sogen. L.C.*; A. W. Pollard, *English Miracle Plays*, p. xxxvii; W. W. Greg, *The Assumption of the Virgin. A Miracle Play from the N-Town Cycle*, Oxford, 1915, pp. 9–21.

[2] Greg, *op. cit.*, pp. 18–19.

[3] Cf. Block, *op. cit.*, pp. xvii–xviii.

[4] *An inquiry into the Composition and Structure of the Ludus Coventriae*, in the *University of Minnesota Studies in Language and Literature*, No. 1.

investigators have reached different conclusions concerning the origin of the Virgin group (plays VIII to XV, exclusive of XIII, the *Visit to Elizabeth*), their studies of its composition lend weight to the theory that the group is based on the life of St. Anne. It seems worth while, therefore, to review their conclusions in some detail.

"The evidence," says Miss Block, "as to the composition of the series to be drawn from the characteristics of the MS. is complicated and often ambiguous, but the following points emerge :

"1. MS. Vesp. D. VIII is the compiler's book, not a transcript from another MS.

"2. It contains a collection of plays made according to a plan which was subject to alteration as it proceeded.

"3. Some of the plays and groups of plays had had a separate existence, having been acted as separate plays or groups.

"One portion of the MS. certainly, and probably two, quires N, P, Q, R, and quires S, T, have also had a separate existence."[1] Now, one of these groups which has had a separate existence is that dealing with the life of the Virgin Mary. Miss Block says that the "compiler is here grafting the plays of the *Contemplacio* series—*The Conception of Mary*, *Mary in the Temple*, and *The Visit to Elizabeth* with a *Dissponsacion* or *Betrothal* and a *Salutation and Conception* play not used, plays of an ecclesiastical character based in part on *Legenda aurea*,—on to another series of Mary plays described in the Proclamation—*The Betrothal*, *Return of Joseph*, *Trial of Joseph and Mary*, *Birth of Christ*, with a *Salutation and Conception* play not used, plays of a simpler and more popular character based directly . . . on the Pseudo gospel of Matthew; and that a later revision or alteration of purpose led to the substitution of a more elaborate *Salutation and Conception* and to some additions, based on Bonaventura's *Meditationes Vitae Christi*."[2]

Miss Swenson's conclusions are slightly different. "It will be noted," she says, "that the prologue states that the prophets shall prophesy, not of Christ, but of a 'qwene the whiche xal staunche our stryff and moote'; and an examination of the prophecies will show that the emphasis lies upon the birth of the Virgin, and not of Christ. . . . The fact that the prologue specifically provides for the prophecies of this nature indicates that the unusual interest in the Virgin Mary was a peculiarity of the cycle originally and not to be ascribed to the period of revision . . .

[1] Block *op. cit.*, pp. xxxiii.
[2] Block, *op. cit.*, pp. xxiv–xxv.

"After these two plays [VI, *Moses and the Laws*, and VII, *The Prophets*], which are comparatively simple, we have the introduction of an Expositor who is called Contemplacio. He recites, before the play proper of Anna and Joachim begins, a general prologue promising to present to the people (1) the story of Anna and Joachim, (2) Mary's presentation in the Temple, (3) her Betrothal, (4) the story of the Salutation, and finally, (5) Mary's visit to Elizabeth. . . . Then follow these five plays dealing with the life of the Virgin which in general tone and style are very different from the plays we have examined so far. The ecclesiastical element is very prominent in these plays, and there can be little doubt that they were introduced into the cycle at some time later than the writing of the Prologue. I do not think, however, that an entirely new group of plays was simply incorporated as a whole into the cycle without any modification. Some of the plays indicate clearly that old material has been combined with new. The Prologue provides for plays on two of these subjects, Mary's Betrothal and the Salutation. The other three plays promised by Contemplacio are not provided for in the Prologue, and in the case of the first two, the Barrenness of Anna and Mary's Presentation, there can be little doubt that they are entirely new. The Visit of Elizabeth, however, bears internal evidence of the combination of two versions." [1]

Now, whether we agree with Miss Block that the Virgin group of plays in the *Ludus Coventriae* is a composite of two older cycles or with Miss Swenson that it consists of an interpolation of new plays into an old group which has been modified for the purpose, there can be little doubt that the group, with the exception of the *Visit to Elizabeth* (*L.C.* XIII), is a separate entity. As such, it constituted a cycle of plays suitable for performance on St. Anne's day; and it probably was so performed by some St. Anne's guild.[2] It seems more probable, therefore, that the original version of this series of plays was based on the life of St. Anne than on the several sources to which it is attributed by Miss Block, Halliwell, and others: *Legenda Aurea*, Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew, and Bonaventura's *Meditationes*, translated by Nicholas Love as *The Mirrour of the Blessed Lyf of Jesu Christ*. The fact that no one of these possible sources contains all the material of the plays, as well as the fact that the plays deal with the lives of St. Anne and the Virgin Mary, militates against this attribution. On the other hand, practically all the

[1] Swenson, *op. cit.*, pp. 17, 26.

[2] Cf. Dodds, M. H., *The Problem of the Ludus Coventriae*, in *Modern Language Review*, IX. 79 ff.

material contained in the plays of *Joachim and Anna* (VIII), *Mary in the Temple* (IX), *The Betrothal of Mary* (X), *The Salutation and Conception* (XI), *The Return of Joseph* (XII), *The Trial of Joseph and Mary* (XIV), and *The Birth of Christ* (XV), with the exception of the Parliament in Heaven—an allegory familiar to all medieval minds—is to be found in the life of St. Anne. Furthermore, the order of arrangement of the material is precisely the same in both the poem and the plays, as the following tabular view will show :

St. Anne. Subject.	*Ludus Coventriae.*
ll. 1–288, *Joachim and Anna—Conception of Mary,*	VIII, ll. 1–226.
ll. 289–408, *Mary in the Temple,*	IX, ll. 84–143, Exposition of fifteen graces. 152–175, Commandments of the high priests. 212–227, Mary's seven petitions.
ll. 409–600, *Betrothal of Mary,*	ll. 1–486.
ll. 601–708, *Salutation and Conception,*	ll. 1–216, Parliament in Heaven. 217-340, Salutation and Conception.
ll. 709–795, *Return of Joseph,*	ll. 1–224.
ll. 799–876, *Trial of Joseph and Mary,*	ll. 1–100, The Detractors. 101–372, The Trial.
ll. 877–1059, *Birth of Christ,*	ll. 1–320.

If it be argued that this arrangement is due to source material common to all the Middle English cycles of plays, my answer is that no other cycle contains *The Conception of Mary* (*Joachim and Anna*), *Mary in the Temple*, *The Betrothal*, or *The Trial of Joseph and Mary*, and that no other cycle follows this arrangement in the same order of detail. A comparative study will incontestably establish these facts. Moreover, the poem on the life of St. Anne contains much material of a dramatic nature. There is an abundance of dialogue in it, and the incidents are narrated with considerable feeling for their dramatic significance ; hence it would lend itself easily to dramatization of the sort found in the cycle plays.

Finally, both the poem and the Virgin Mary plays contain an unusual amount of legendary and apocryphal material. The *Ludus Coventriae* is the most legendary of the Middle English cycles of plays ; but all the legendary material of the Virgin group, with the exception of the cherry-

tree episode, is to be found in the life of St. Anne. These facts, supported by the peculiar history of the composition of this group of plays, indicate something more than mere coincidence and point to the use of the life of St. Anne as the source of the Virgin group of the *Ludus Coventriae*.

Still more convincing evidence in support of this theory is to be found in the close verbal similarities of the two compositions, similarities which occasionally extend to the use of identical rimes. It now remains to tabulate these similarities. Since, however, Miss Block, in her recent edition of the *Ludus Coventriae*, has carefully listed the sources of this group of plays, so far as these sources were known to her, it seems better to discuss each play separately before tabulating corresponding passages, in order that the relative merits of all possible sources may be examined.[1]

The first of the Virgin group of the cycle is the *Joachim and Anna-Conception of Mary* play (*L.C.* VIII). According to Miss Block, "It can . . . be shown that the *Legenda aurea* was the actual authority used for the *Conception of Mary* at least. The marginal genealogies on folios preceding the *Conception of Mary* are taken from Chapter 130 of the *Legenda aurea*; the phrase *regale sacerdocium* (cf. *Conception of Mary*, l. 15) occurs in it and not in the gospel *De Nativitate*; and the words used of the rejection of Joachim's offering in *Legenda aurea*, *cum indignatione nimi repulsit*, seem rather to be echoed in '*with grett indygnacion þin offeryng I refuse*' than the words in the gospel: *despexit eum et munera eius sprevit*." [2] Convincing as this argument may seem, it is not conclusive. The genealogies preceding this play in the manuscript are also to be found in the life of St. Anne, ll. 3049–3084; *Legenda Aurea* gives no name to the priest who refuses Joachim's offering, whereas the life of St. Anne gives his name as *Isakar* and the play as *Ysakar*; and the verbal resemblances of the play and the poem, as will appear from the following comparison, are even more striking in many points than those cited by Miss Block. It appears more probable, therefore, that such variations from the poem as occur in the play are the result of the revision which this play obviously underwent at the time of its incorporation into the cycle than that they are the result of the influence of the *Legenda Aurea*. This view is supported by the following list of parallels:

[1] I have used Miss K. S. Block's edition of the *Ludus Coventriae*, and references are given by play and line to this edition.

[2] Block, *op. cit.*, p. xiv.

Life of St. Anne.

& of þe frute þat god hym sent
He parted it *wit* gud entent
In iij partes als I say :
A party to gyf wald he noȝt spare
To þam þat in þe tempyll ware
At serued god nyght & day.
Þe secu*n*de part gayf he neu*er*þelesse
To widows & childer fadyrlesse
& other pouer at lay.
Þe thryd parte alway ordand he
To susten hy*m* & hys meynhe ;
Þis was all hys aray.
(ll. 37–48)

Boyth day & nyght bisili þai prayed
& *wit* a voyce bayth þai sayde
To gret god on þis wyse :
If he walde of hys curtasy
Sende þam su*m* frute of hyr body
To offer yt to god se*r*uysse.
(ll. 61–66)

Of his comyng was Ioachim agrysed,
For he hy*m* & hys offryng dispysed
& sayd on þis ma*n*e*r*.
Oute of þis tempyll fast þu wende ;
Among gude me*n* sall þu noȝt lende
To make non offryng here,
Ffor gode has vised þam ylkane ;
& frute of þe comes þ*er* ryght nane,
Male ne famal sere :
& god cursse þa*m* þ*at* no fruyte beres.
Ioachym þa*n* *wit* wepyng teres
Away went i*n* were.
(ll. 85–96)

Ludus Coventriae.

I am clepyd Ryghtful why wole ȝe se
Ffor my godys in to thre partys I devyde
On to þe temple. *and* hem þ*at* þ*er* servynge be
A nodyr to þ*e* pylg*ri*mys *and* pore men.
Þe iijde ffor he*m* *wit*h me abyde
So xulde euery curat in þis werde wyde
ȝeve a part to his chauncel i-wys
A part to his parochoner*ys* þ*at* to povert slyde
the thryd part to kepe for hy*m* *and* his
(VIII, ll. 25–32)

but this I Avow to God *wit*h all the mekenes I can
ȝyff of his mercy he wole a childe us devyse
We xal offre it up i*n* the temple to be goddys man
(ll. 38–40)

But blyssyd wyff Anne sor*e* I drede
In þe temple þis time to make sacryfice
Be cawse þ*at* no frute of us doth p*ro*cede
I fere me greatly þ*e* prest wole me dysspice
(ll. 33–36)
þou *and* þi Wyff arn barrany *and* bare
neyther of ȝow. ffruteful nevyr ȝett ware
Whow durste þ*ou* a-monge fruteful p*re*sume *and* Abuse
It is a tokyn þ*ou* art cursyd þare.
(ll. 76–80)
þ*ou* joachym I charge the fast
out þ*e* temple þ*ou* go
(l. 83)

Life of St. Anne.

& for neghburs herd hys shame
Þerfore durst he noȝth wend hame.
(ll. 97–98)

So for þu me no childer sent
My husband now away es went,
Ded trow I best he be;
& whore to fynd hym wate I noȝt
Þat he to beryng myght be broght;
Forþi full wo es me.
(ll. 121–126)

Anna, drede þow þe no dele,
For god has herd þi prayer wele
& sothely I þe say
Þi brith in gods awn counsel is.
(ll. 133–136)

Ludus Coventriae.

Ffor hevynes I dare not go hom to my wyff
And amonge my neyborys. I dare not abyde ffor shame.
(ll. 96–97)

Alas ffor myn husbond. me is full wo
I xal go seke him. what so evyr be falle
I wote not in erth which wey is he go
ffadyr of hefne ffor mercy. to ȝour ffete I falle
(ll. 187–190)

and as I seyd to hym so to þe sey I xal
god hath herd þi prayour. and þi wepynge
(ll. 193–194)

Attention is called to two corresponding rimes in these passages: *seruyse* (l. 66) : *devyse* (l. 39) and *shame* (l. 97) : *shame* (l. 97).

For the *Mary in the Temple* play (*L.C.* IX) there are several possible sources: Lydgate's *Lyf of Our Lady*, Love's *Mirrour* (translated from Bonaventura's *Meditationes*), *Legenda Aurea*, the apocryphal *De Nativitate* and *Pseudo-Matthew*, and the *Life of St. Anne*. Miss Block considers the first four of these possible sources and decides in favour of the *Meditationes* because in it "the three precepts observed by Mary are distinct from the seven petitions, though they correspond to the first three. Lydgate gives only the seven petitions."[1] But it is to be noted that the *Meditationes* does not mention the fifteen steps of the temple which Mary ascends alone, the steps which represent the fifteen graces and correspond to the fifteen Gradual Psalms, and the exposition of which occupies a fourth of the entire play. The three precepts, on the other hand, are simply a statement of the two Great Commandments combined with the ecclesiastical injunction to hate the devil; and the seven petitions are prayers for the well known seven virtues.[2] The heart of the play is the exposition of the fifteen graces and of the manner of life which the Virgin Mary led during her years in the temple; these

[1] Block, *op. cit.*, pp. xlvi–xlvii.
[2] Cf. Mark's Gospel 12 : 29–31; E.E.T.S. 26, 1; Wells, *A Manual of the Writings in Middle English*, pp. 348, 484.

are likewise the things emphasized in the life of St. Anne, ll. 289–408. Hence the assumption that these central themes, taken from the poem, constituted the source of the original play and that the precepts and petitions are the additions of the reviser would appear to be a safe one. This assumption is supported by the following tabulation of resemblances :

Life of St. Anne.	*Ludus Coventriae*, IX.
Wit other damsels þaym was dere To þe temple þai hyr led. (ll. 293–294)	late us take mary our dowtere us be-twen *and* to þe temple with here procede (ll. 10–11)
Þer xv greces so lang and brade In þe honor of þe xv psalmes was made Þat þis childe wente up by. (ll. 313–315)	If þe fyftene grees. þou may Ascende It is meracle if þou do. now god þe dyffende Ffrom babylony to hevynly jherusalem þis is þe way Every man þat thynk his lyff to Amende þe fiftene psalmys in memorye of þis mayde say (ll. 79–84)
We offer up here to goddes servyse Oure child our god to knawe & to serue als we haue hith. (ll. 341–343)	Sere prince of prestes and it plese 3ow We þat were barreyn god hath sent us a childe to offre here to goddys service we mad oure avow here is þe same mayde. mary moste mylde. (ll. 33–36)
Þe bisshops wer glad of þat syght. þer þai stod all on rawe & merualyd þat so 3ohng a thyng All hyr werkys to goddes plesyng So sone couth dresse & drawe. (ll. 344–348)	A gracyous lord þis is A mervelyous thynge þat we se here all in syght A babe of thre 3er age so 3ynge to come up þese grecys. so upryght It is An hey meracle *and* by goddys myght no dowth of she xal be gracyous. (ll. 144–149)

In these parallel passages the following corresponding rimes appear : *syght* (l. 344) : *syght* (l. 145), *thyng* (l. 346) : *thynge* (l. 144), *plesyng* (l. 347) : *3ynge* (l. 146).

The dependence of the *Betrothal of Mary* (*L.C.* X) on the life of St.

Anne is even more obvious. Of the possible sources usually considered, the *Meditationes* is silent; in Lydgate and Pseudo-Matthew only the dove appears on Joseph's rod; neither *Legenda Aurea* nor the apocryphal *De Nativitate* gives the names of the maidens who attend the Virgin, their names being found only in Pseudo-Matthew and Lydgate's *Lyf of Oure Lady*; and *Legenda Aurea* and *De Nativitate* represent the priest as neglecting Joseph's rod, whereas in the play Joseph himself is at fault. The life of St. Anne, on the other hand, contains the flowering rod which "doth blome and bere," gives the names of two of the maidens as they appear in the play (with three additional names not given in the play), and portrays Joseph as the delinquent in the presentation of his rod.[1] This is the only possible source known which contains all these elements approximately as they appear in the play; hence it would seem to be the source of the play. This claim is substantiated by the following resemblances in phraseology:

Life of St. Anne.

Late be, syrys, it may noȝt be done
  þat I suld wax so wyld
To knawe a husbande noȝ ȝyt he me;
I haue gyfne myn vyrgynyte
  To god at kep unfylde.
(ll. 428–432)

þe prest þan of þe trybe als faste
  Befor hym ded he call
All men þat war unweddid þan
& oppenly byfor ylke man
  Charged both gret & small

On þe morne þat þai suld ald & yhyng
Euer ylkon to þe tempyll bryng
  þe yherd of a vyne tre
. . . . .
Als þare offrand yow lay þam þare
& byd þe folke þat þai noght spare
  þat day & nyght to pray.
On þe morne put þe yherdes in þe handes,
& in qwhilke yherde þis selkouth standes
  Gyf hym mary alway.
(ll. 488–495, 511–516)

Ludus Coventriae, X.

Aȝens þe lawe wyl I nevyr be
but mannys ffelachep xal nevyr folwe me
I wyl levyn evyr in chastyte
be þe grace of goddys wylle
(ll. 36–39)

This is goddys owyn byddyng
þat all kynsmen of dauyd þe kyng
to þe temple xul brynge here offryng
with whyte ȝardys in þer honde

loke wele what tyme þei offere there
all here ȝardys in þin hand þou take
take heed whose ȝerde doth blome and bere
and he xal be þe maydenys make
(ll. 125–132)

[1] Cf. Block, *op. cit.*, pp. xlvii-xlviii.

Life of St. Anne.

He saw þat Iosep yherd hade none,
& to þe tempell hade he broght one ;
Fforþi to hym he ȝhede.
. . . . . .
Bot Iosep ȝyt had moste drede.

Ffor ferde þe byshop suld hym blame
Iosep couth speke no wrode for shame
Bot stode & lokyd myldly.
(ll. 544–546, 552–555)

Þe bysshop & all þat hym behelde
Sayd : man, þou erte blist in þine elde,
Fful wele es þe forthy ;
Of god allone þu es chosen here
To haue þis damysell þat us es dere
Att wede hyr oppynly.
He sayde to þam : for shame, lat be !
What suld a yhong wench do wit me?
My banes er old & dry.

& god haues sent me childre also ;
Þerfore wyfys will I haue no mo.
Lat sum ȝong man hyr take.
(ll. 557–567)

Iosep answerd þan on þis wyse :
Godes byddyng wil I noȝt dispise,
For I am lowed & still
Redy at do þat ȝe commande.
(ll. 580–583)

& for hyr solace & hyr game
Ffyue virgnis sal be wit ȝou same,
Þe best in al þis place.
. . . . . .
Þe name of þas v I vnderstande
Als we in þe boke þam wreten fande
Herkens wit gude intent :

Ludus Coventriae, X.

Episcopus
Whath joseph why stande ȝe there by-hynde
I-wys sere ȝe be to blame
Joseph
sere I kan nat my rodde ffynde
to come þer in trowth me thynkyht shame
sere he may Euyl go þat is ner lame
in soth I cam as fast as I may

Episcopus
offyr up ȝour rodde sere in goddys name
why do ȝe not as men ȝow pray.
(ll. 233–241)

Episcopus
Þou mayst be blyth with game *and* gle
A mayd to wedde þou must gone
be þis meracle I do wel se
Mary is here name
Joseph
What xulde I wedde god for-bede
I am an old man so god me spede
and with a wyff now. to levyn in drede
It wore nyther sport nere game
(ll. 264–271)

Joseph
A-ȝens my God not do I may
here wardeyn *and* kepere wyl I evyr be
(ll. 289–290)

Þer fore Euyl langage for to swage
þat ȝour good fame may leste longe
iij damysellys xul dwelle with ȝow in stage
With þi wyff to be evyr more a-monge
I xal these iij here take
Susanne þe fyrst xal be

Life of St. Anne.	*Ludus Coventriae*, X.
Gentea & sophora hyght þe twa, Sussanna and albigia, þe fyfte hyght agabell. (ll. 589–591, 608–615)	Rebecca þe secunde xal go with the Sephore þe thrydde. loke þat ȝe thre þis maydon nevyr ȝe for-sake. (ll. 348–356)

The following corresponding rimes appear in the above passages: *me* (l. 430) : *me* (l. 37), *vyrgynyte* (l. 431) : *chastyte* (l. 38), *yhyng* (l. 493) : *kyng* (l. 126), *bryng* (l. 494) : *offryng* (l. 127), *blame* (l. 553) : *blame* (l. 235), *shame* (l. 554) : *shame* (l. 237).

The *Salutation and Conception* play (*L.C.* XI) has long been a puzzle to commentators, largely on account of the discrepancy between the character of the play announced in the Prologue and that of the play which appears in the cycle. Professor Greg states the problem of this play as follows: "It begins with what Contemplatio . . . calls the 'parlement of hefne,' the well-known contention of the four daughters of God, and then proceeds to a Salutation simple in design, but elaborate and distinctly ecclesiastical in composition. Now the stanza in the Prologue describes a quite simple Annunciation play of the usual type, and cannot by any possibility have been written for the play we have in the text. Observe in particular that Mary's three maidens hear the Angel's voice but see no one, while the text makes no mention of them whatever."[1] Miss Swenson similarly states the problem and adds: "This ecclesiastical tone so pervades the whole play that it would almost seem as if none of the original cycle play had been preserved, and that this play, like the Barrenness of Anna (*L.C.* VIII) and Mary's Presentation (*L.C.* IX), had been substituted entirely from the Virgin play."[2] And Miss Block believes "that a later [than the date of the composition of the Prologue] revision or alteration of purpose led to the substitution of a more elaborate *Salutation and Conception* and to some additions, based on Bonaventura's *Meditationes Vitae Christi*."[3] She bases her belief, so far as it concerns the *Meditationes* of Bonaventura, on certain verbal resemblances to Love's *Mirrour*, p. 29; but there are even closer resemblances, as the following tabulation will show, to the life of St. Anne. This poem, however, does not contain the Parliament in Heaven, which occupies 216 of the 340 lines of the play as we have it now. In the poem, on the other hand, the Virgin's attending maidens

[1] W. W. Greg, *Bibliographical and Textual Problems of the English Miracle Cycles*, London, 1914, p. 128.
[2] Swenson, *op. cit.*, p. 30.
[3] Block, *op. cit.*, pp. xxiv–xxv, xlv, xlviii.

do overhear the first salutation of the Angel Gabriel, who appears at the moment when they are blaming the Virgin for attempting to become their "qwhene." The facts, then, seem to be these: the Prologue was written for a simple *Salutation and Conception* play of an ecclesiastical nature, based on the life of St. Anne, which was later revised by prefixing the familiar and popular Parliament in Heaven and reworking the salutation scene so as to bring it into accord with the additional scene. This view is supported by the fact that the life of St. Anne devotes 103 lines to the subject and the play, exclusive of the Parliament in Heaven, 123 lines. It is also supported by the following verbal resemblances:

Life of St. Anne.	*Ludus Coventriae,* XI.
. . mary, full of grace, God is *wit* þe þis day; Of all women blyssede by yhow. (ll. 665–667)	Heyl fful of grace god is *with* the Amonge All women blyssyd art thu (ll. 217–218)
Þe angell sayd: mary, dred þe noȝth; Þe *grace* þat þu so lange haues soght I*n* god has fon it clere. Be you sall consaue *wi*touten syn & bere a child þu clen virgyn, Ihesus is name is here. He sall be gret & goddes son calde; Hys fader sall gyf hym þe see to hald Of dauid þ*at* is hy*m* dere. In þe huse of Iacob þan sall he lende & regne i*n* heuen *wi*touten ende & i*n* erth fer & nere. (ll. 673–684)	Mary in þis take ȝe no drede Ffor At God. grace ffownde have ȝe ȝe xal conceyve in ȝour wombe in dede A childe þe sone of þe trynyte His name of ȝow jhesu clepyd xal be He xal be grett. þe son of þe hyest. clepyd of kende *and* of his ffadyr davyd. þe lord xal ȝeve hy*m* þe se Reynyng i*n* þe hous of jacob. of which regne xal be no ende. (ll. 237–244)
How suld þis thyng on me be layde & man knew I neue*r* none? (ll. 686–687)	In what manere of wyse xal þis be Ffor knowyng of man I haue non now. (ll. 246–247)
To þis þe an*n*gell þan answerd he & sayd: þe halygøst sall light i*n* þe, Umlap þe blod & bone. On þe sall born be goddes awn child;	The holy gost xal come fro Above to the *and* þe vertu of hy*m* hyest xal schadu þe so. Ther fore þ*at* holy gost of þe xal be bore.

Life of St. Anne.

& se eliȝabeth, þi cosyne so mylde,
Sex monethes ys yt now gone.
Þai called hyr baran *in* toun &
felde;
Now haues scho consaued *in* hyr
elde
Of goddes gret *grace* allone;
Nothyng impossible may be forthy
To god; þerfore dred þe noȝth,
mary.
(ll. 688–698)

Goddes awn handmaidy*n* es me
here;
Als he wyll be yt don.
(ll. 701–702)

Ludus Coventriae, XI.

he xal be clepyd þe son of god sage
And se Elyȝabeth ȝ*our* cosyn thore
She hath conseyvid A son in hyre
Age
This is þe sexte monyth of here
passage.
Of here þat clepyd was bareyn
no thynge is *im*possyble to goddys
vsage.
(ll. 251–259)

Se here þe hand-mayden of oure
lorde
Aftyr þi worde. be it don to me.
(ll. 287–288)

The following rimes occur in the passages above in corresponding context: *yhow* (l. 667): *thu* (l. 218), *lende* (l. 682): *kende* (l. 243), *ende* (l. 683): *ende* (l. 244), þe (l. 689): *the* (l. 251).

The *Return of Joseph* (*L.C.* XII) is accepted by critics as belonging to the original cycle, and Miss Block assigns the Pseudo-Matthew as its source. The verbal evidence, however, indicates that it is not based directly on the Pseudo-Matthew but on the life of St. Anne, ll. 709–795, which, as has been shown already, is a paraphrase of Pseudo-Matthew. Additional evidence of this fact is to be found in the prevailing verse form of the play, which is a ten-line stanza riming aabaabbcbc. This seems to show the influence of the aabccbddbeeb stanzaic structure of the poem. The following passages show similarities in phraseology:

Life of St. Anne.

Scho rase up myldly hym agayne
& of hyr wambe was he noȝt fayne,
Bot it myght noȝt be hid.

For qwen he saw þat it was so
grete
All þe fyue v*er*gnis fast gon he
threte
& lowd began to cry.
He fell done & thus gate he sayde:
What happ, lord, has þu for me
layde?
So ald a man als I

Ludus Coventriae, XII.

That semyth evyl I am afrayd
þi wombe to hyȝe doth stonde
I drede me sore I am be-trayd
Sum other man þe had in honde
Hens sythe þat I went
Thy Wombe is gret it gynnyth to
reyse
than hast þou be-gownne a synfull
gyse
telle me now in what wyse
thy self þow Ast þus schent
(ll. 25–33)

Life of St. Anne.

Sall now haue more shame & more anger.
Lord, lat me are lyfe no longere
Bot dight me here to dy;
And damoyselles, he sayd, wo yow be;
Ffalsly have ȝe desseuede me,
So haue ȝe don mary.
(ll. 730–744)

ȝe say þan þe angell made hir wit child:
Nay, sum lyke an angell has hyr begiled,
A ȝong man wit sum gyn.
(ll. 766–768)

What me ys best wate I noght now;
I wax als heuy as led.
& I dare loke no man in þe face
In þe tempyll no in na place
For shame. Why ne were I ded?
(ll. 770–774)

Þe angell appered to hym þat nyght,
Bad: Iosep, turn þi red
& dred ye noȝthyng of þis lyf
For to take mary to þi wyf,
Ne thynke wit hyr no shame.
Þe child þat scho sall bere in hast
Scho has consayued thurgh þe halygast,
& jhesus sall be hys name;
Gret gods awn power sall haue
All-hys folke fra syn to saue
Þat adam broght in blame.
Iosep at morne he went belyue
To mary & to þis vergnis fyue
& told þam all þis same.
He thankyd god & was full glad,
Bot of þe suspecion he to þam had
He asked mary forgayfnes.
(ll. 779–795)

Ludus Coventriae, XII.

It was sum boy be-gan þis game
þat clothyd was clene *and* gay
and ȝe ȝeve hym now an anngel name.
(ll. 57–77)

Now alas whedyr xal I gone
I wot nevyr whedyr nor to what place
ffor oftyn tyme sorwe comyth sone
and longe it is or it pace
no comforte may I haue here
(ll. 118–122)

I know wel I haue myswrought
I walk to my pore place
and Aske ffor-gyfnes I haue mysthought

Now is þe tyme sen At eye
þat þe childe is now to veryfye
which xal saue mankende
As it was spoke be prophesye
I thank þe god þat syttys on hye
with hert wyl *and* mende
þat evyr þou woldyst me bynde
to wedde mary to my wyff
þi blysful sone. se nere to fynde
In his presens. to lede my lyff.
(ll. 167–179)

These passages have the following corresponding rimes: *place* (l.

773) : *place* (l. 119), *face* (l. 772) : *pace* (l. 121), *lyf* (l. 781) : *lyff* (l. 179), *wyf* (l. 782) : *wyff* (l. 172).

The life of St. Anne does not mention the *Visit to Elizabeth* (*L.C.* XIII) ; neither does the Pseudo-Matthew nor *De Nativitate* mention it. It is not provided for in the Prologue and may, therefore, be considered as a later addition to the cycle ; hence it could not have belonged in the original Virgin group of plays.

The *Trial of Joseph and Mary* (*L.C.* XIV) is a combination of coarse humour (contained in the speeches of the slanderers) with the simple and reverent dignity of the purgation ceremony. "The Prologue to this play," says Miss Swenson, ". . . is a simple quatrain. It does not adequately represent the play, but simply speaks of the fact that Joseph and Mary were slandered and went to their purgation. The purgation scene itself is simple and reverent enough and may possibly have been a part of the original cycle.

"The introductory speech of Den, with its long list of alliterative and allegorical names, is written into the manuscript in a different hand before the figure 14 occurs and belongs probably to a later period." She also notes the return of the name "Abiyachar" for the bishop rather than "Ysakar."[1] Miss Block does not think that the speech of Den is written by a different hand, but agrees that this play is one of those which was subjected to the process of "dovetailing and revision." She thinks it is probably based on Pseudo-Matthew, which it does not follow closely.[2] But it is to be noted that the life of St. Anne, ll. 799 ff., exactly follows the scheme of the play given in the Prologue. Joseph and Mary are "wreghed" by all the people, "for þam yll thoght," are brought to trial before "abythar . . . byshop of þe lawe," and are acquitted of all blame by the purgation ceremony. Now the name "Abyathar" might easily be confused with "Abiyachar" by a scribe ; and this is probably what happened in this case as in many others of which we know. The history of the play, then, would seem to be this : the original Virgin group of plays contained a simple *Trial of Joseph and Mary* which was ecclesiastical in tone and based on the life of St. Anne ; but this play was revised by the compiler of the *Ludus Coventriae* cycle, who added the horse-play of the detractors and the bit of poetic justice by which one of the chief detractors was forced to drink of the purgation water. This conclusion is attested by the following verbal resemblances :

[1] Swenson, *op. cit.*, pp. 32–33.
[2] Block, *op. cit.*, pp. xxiv, xlviii.

Life of St. Anne.

Iosep swore fast & mad hym clene
To god gon witnesse drawe
þat he neuer wit wyll hyr knew ne wyst
So mekyll þat scho a man aues kyst.

. . . .

Iosep sayd: ȝe sall all wele wytt
þat scho ys clene vergyn ȝytt
Boyth in thoght & dede.
(ll. 812–815, 820–822)

& many other prestes þat þare wasse
Sayd: so lyghtly sall þu noȝt passe,
Wit swilke lyrtes us lede.
A maner of watyr þai had þerfore
In þe tempyll was kepyd in store
For thyng þat was in drede

þat whoso ware of a thyng gilty
& drank þerof suld haue oppenly
A gret spot in hys face.
þai gar hym drynke þar he stode.
(ll. 823–832)

To drynk þarof had scho na drede,
& boute þe auter sithen scho ȝede
Seuen sythes witouten more.
(ll. 856–858)

Ludus Coventriae, XIV.

Sche is for me a trewe clene mayde
And I for hire am clene Also
of ffleschly synne I nevyr a-sayde
sythyn þat sche was weddyd me to
(ll. 193–196)

Thus xalt not schape from vs ȝitt so
Fyrst þou xalte tellyn us a-nother lay
Streyt to þe Awtere þou xalt go
þe drynge of vengeawns þer to a-say.
(ll. 197–200)

Here xal I drynke. be-fore ȝour face
A-bowth þis Awtere than xal I fonde
vij tymes to go by godys grace.
(ll. 262–264)

"The use of the *Pseudo-Matthew* Gospel is clearest in the *Birth* play," says Miss Block, "where the incident of the midwives follows the original very closely. . . . The suggestion of the cherry-tree incident comes also from this gospel where a similar story is told of a palm-tree passed on the journey into Egypt."[1] But again the verbal similarities point to the use of the life of St. Anne, which follows the Pseudo-Matthew Gospel very closely at this point. Both differ from the play (*L.C.* XV) in that in them Christ is born in a cave instead of in "an hous of haras . . . amonge bestys," and in that they have Mary's vision of the two peoples, Jews and pagans, instead of the cherry-tree episode. The life of St. Anne, following the B-version of Pseudo-Matthew, gives the names of the two midwives as ȝebell and Salome instead of ȝelomy

[1] Block, *op. cit.*, p. xlviii.

and Salome. But both pairs of names were common (*Legenda Aurea*, p. 42, Graesse Ed., has Zebel and Salome), and the confusion is easily accounted for either by scribal error or by metrical demands. As for the cherry-tree episode, it must have been substituted for the vision of the Jews and pagans or for the similar date-tree incident (St. Anne, ll. 1500 ff.) under the influence of a popular poem such as that printed by Hone.[1] The essential elements of the play, however, are contained in the life of St. Anne; and the following resemblances in phraseology are convincing proof of its use by the author of the *Birth of Christ* play:

Life of St. Anne.

He spake þan unto mylde mary
& saide: leve doghter myne,
Me bus wende now bedlam unto
At pay þer als our neghboures do;
*Þer*fore heygh we us heyne.
(ll. 908–912)

Iosep 3ohod to mary þan,
Sayd: here er two mydwyfs *þat* can
Of women *preuetes* knaw;
& mary smyled. Laghes þu? sayd he.
He saw a knaue child on hyr kne;
Þan sayde he: I was ou*er* slaw.
(ll. 1003–1008)

Lord god, scho sayde, mercy.
Þe syght *þat* I se here!

Here hys a m*er*uayll was neu*er* none swylke:
I felt hyr two pappes full of milke
& a childe frely borne,
& wymbe of birth es here non sene;
Scho moder es als a mayden clene.
Þis was neu*er* sene beforne.
(ll. 1019–1026)

Ludus Coventriae, XV.

Now my wyff mary. what sey 3e to this
For sekyr nedys I must fforth wende
On to *þe* cyte of bedleem ffer hens i-wys
Þus to labor*e* I must my body bend*e*.
(ll. 9–12)

the for to comforte in gesyn*e* þis day
tweyn gode mydwyuis I haue brought here
. . . .
Why do 3e lawgh wyff 3e be to blame
I pray 3ow spowse do no more so
(ll. 171–172, 181–182)

O myghtfull god have mercy on me
A merveyle *þat* nevyr was herd be-forn
Here opynly I fele *and* se
A fayr child of a maydon is born
And nedyth no waschynge as other don
Fful clene *and* pur*e* for soth is he
wi*th*-outyn spot or ony polucyon
his modyr nott hurte of virgynite.
(ll. 225–232)

[1] William Hone, *Ancient Mysteries Described*, pp. 90–93.

Life of St. Anne.

Allas, scho sayd, I am lorne.
Ffull wele I wote I haue done mys;
For my mystrowyng all haf I þis
Þat I lyfed *in* a drede;
& god þu wote I lufed nyght & day
Women & chylder to help þam ay.
Holpe now me *in* þis nede.
(ll. 1032–1038)

Gabrell bad hyr aske mary forgyfnes
And sayde: touche þe childe *þat* borne es
Þu sall be hale gude spede.
(ll. 1039–1041)

Ludus Coventriae, XV.

O lord of myght *þou* knowyst *þe* trowth
þat I have evyr had dred of *þe*
on every power whyght evyr I have rowthe
and 3ove hem almes for loue of *þe*
Bothe wyff *and* wedowe *þat* Askyght for the
And frendles chyledryn *þat* haddyn grett nede
I dude them cure *and* all for the
and toke no rewarde of them nor mede.
(ll. 265–272)

Woman *þi* sorwe to haue de-layde
wurchep *þat* childe *þat þer* is born
towch *þe* clothis *þer* he is layde
ffor he xal saue all *þat* is lorn
(ll. 277–280)

In these parallel passages are found the following corresponding rimes: *drede* (l. 1035): *nede* (l. 270), *nede* (l. 1038): *mede* (l. 272).

Although the life of St. Anne contains the stories found in the *Adoration of the Shepherds*, *Purification*, *Magi*, *Massacre of the Innocents and Death of Herod*, and the *Dispute between Christ and the Doctors*, the verbal similarities to the *Ludus Coventriae* cease with the *Birth of Christ*, except in three or four short passages common to all accounts of the events in which they occur. We must conclude, therefore, either that the series of striking similarities of the Virgin group of plays in the *Ludus Coventriae* cycle to the corresponding parts of the life of St. Anne constitutes a rare coincidence or that the life of St. Anne is the source of the original Virgin group of the cycle. Since all the evidence indicates that this series of similarities is not a coincidence, we may assert with a considerable degree of confidence that the Minnesota MS. version of the life of St. Anne is the source of that group of plays in the *Ludus Coventriae* which portrays the life of St. Anne, the life of the Virgin Mary, and the birth of Christ.

V. Conclusions.

These hitherto inaccessible poems are of considerable interest to the student of Middle English literature, for they deal with a subject

intimately connected with the life of the period. Saints' lives were inextricably interwoven with the religious, social, and commercial life of Medieval England; and St. Anne, around whose cult the legends of the Virgin and the Christ centred, was an important figure in all these phases of life. This fact is emphasized by the stanzaic versions of her life, for the five poems belong to three different types in origin, structure, and content. With the originals from which they are descended, they cover a period of considerably more than a century; and they illustrate how throughout this long period the two great storehouses of medieval religious lore, the apocryphal gospels and the *Legenda Aurea*, were drawn upon by both church and guild. These poems show that the patron saint of church or guild was frequently also the patron saint of didactic poetry written for popular consumption.

The linguistic significance of these poems must also be taken into account. Since the poems cover almost half of England, they illustrate the status of the English language as it was written in the fifteenth century near the southern limits of the Northern dialect, in the N.E. Midlands, in the E. Midlands, and in the S. Midlands. The fact that compositions may be so accurately located by their dialectal peculiarities, even when the dialects are not preserved in their pure states, is evidence that England was still, in the fifteenth century, far from a homogeneous literary standard of usage.

For the student of the Middle English drama, however, the chief interest in these stanzaic versions of the life of St. Anne lies in the fact that the Minnesota MS. version furnishes a logical source for the much disputed Virgin group of the *Ludus Coventriae*. It contains all the material of plays VIII to XV with the single exception of the interpolated *Visit to Elizabeth* (XIII); and the similarities in dialect, content, and phraseology present convincing evidence that this poem is the source of the Virgin group of plays.

I

The Life of St. Anne

MS. University of Minnesota Z. 822, N. 81
(Formerly Phillips MS. 8122).

All þat haues lyking for to lere
Off prophetes sawes & storys sere,
Herkens now to me.
A lytill tretice ȝe sall here [fol. 185b]
Of anna & hyr doghter dere, Invocation.
Mary þat maydyn fre ;
How scho was born & in what land
Als seynt mathew yt wretyn fand
In grew & þerfor he
Made it in latyn out of grewe
Als saynt Ierom þe doctour trew
Witnes it suld be.

& forthermore als þe story says
It befel in our elder days
In ierslum was it swa.
Þer wond a man of nobil fame, Joachim of Jerusalem was a virtuous man.
& Ioachim þan was his name,
Born in þe land of Iuda.
He was rytght wys in ylke a dede,
& god ouyr all most gon he drede.
With other vertues ma
He was bath meke & mylde
& buxom boȝth to man & chylde,
Noȝth wele qwhen þam was wa.

& for he lufd his god so wele,
He multiplied so his catele
For sothe as I ȝow tell

Note : Initial letters in each verse have been rubricated throughout this MS. ; therefore initial *ff* is printed *Ff* for the sake of accuracy and to prevent confusion with *ff* which is not rubricated.

Unnethes lyued þe any slyke
Of gude lyuyng was none hym lyke
þat dwelled in Isrel.
As herde he kepyd hys awn shepe
Of other thyng toke he no kepe
Nowther to by no selle ;
Bot he & other of hys housald
To kepe hys catell, for so þai wald,
Full fayre be fyrth & fell.

Joachim divides his property into three parts.

& of þe frute þat god hym sent
He parted it with gud entent
In iij partes als I say :
A party to gyf wald he noȝt spare
To þam þat in þe tempyll ware
At serued god nyght & day.
þe secunde part gayf he neuer þe lesse
To widows & childer fadyrlesse
& other pouer at lay.
þe thryd parte alway ordand he
To susten hym & hys meynyhe.
þis was all hys aray.

Joachim marries Anne, daughter of Agar, and they are childless for twenty years.

In þis wyse lede þat man hys lyfe,
& sythen þai did hym haue a wyfe
When he was xxti ȝer.
Anna þan says þe boke scho hight ;
Scho was one of þe fayrest wyght
þat þan lyued ffer or ner.

[fol. 186a]

Agar doghter was þat virgyn ;
Comen scho was of dauid kyn ;
þerfore þai made gude chere.
At þe mariage was gret gamen.
Withouten childer þai leued sam
All fully xxti ȝere.

They pray for a child.

Boyth day & nyght bisili þai prayed
& with a voyce bayth þai sayde
To gret god on þis wyse :
If he walde of hys curtasy
Sende þam sum frute of hyr body
To offer yt to god seruyse.

To gete þai prayede always
& went to þe tempyll on þer fest days,
For help *in* prayer lyse ;
& at þe laste god *þer* prayer herde.
Bot herkyns fyrst how yt ferde
Er *þer* frute myght ryse.

Apon a fest day þus ytt stode :
þe paryshyn to þe temple ȝode
With many folk of kyn ;
Amang þaim *þer* als þai gan stande
Ylk m*an* redy *with* hys offerande
Dressed hy*m* *with*outen*n* dyn.
þe bysshop þan hyght Isakar ;
Of Ioachym sone was he war.
To hy*m* fast gon he ryn
To offer *þer* ryght als other did ;
& so þis wonder hy*m* betyd
Er þai suld begyn.

They go to the temple to make an offering.

Of his comyng was Ioachym agrysed,
For he hy*m* & hys offryng dispysed
& sayd on þis man*er* :
Oute of þis tempyll fast þu wende ;
Among gude me*n* sall þu no3t lende
To make non offryng here,
Ffor gode has vised þam ylkane ;
& frute of þe comes *þer* ryght nane,
Male ne famal sere :
& god cursse *þam* *þat* na fruyte beres.
Ioachym þa*n* *with* wepyng teres
Away went *in* were.

The priest refuses Joachim's offering because he is childless.

& for neghburs herd hys shame
*þer*fore durst he no3th wend hame
Bot to þe helles held þas ;
& all hys bestes *with* hys hyrdme*n*
He draue *þam* oure thurgh fell & fen
To a uncouth place
Tyll he some xxti dayes io*ur*nay þithen.
All fully fyue monethes dwelt he sythe*n*
Fra anna *in* þis cas

Joachim flees to the hills in shame.

[fol. 186b]

Þat scho wist of hym *in* no stede
Whether þat he war whik or dede.
Full lang thoght hyr þat spas.

Anne prays to God.

& as sho lay *in* hyr moste drede
Apo*n* a day til hyr yherde sho yhede,
Co*m*pany had sho non.
Under a tre þat laureall hatt
In an herber on knes sho satt
To god makand hyr mone.
A nest of sparowes saw sho þare :
Lord god, sho sayd, þin are
Ylk best of blod & bone
Haues ioy of þe fruyte þat þai furth bryng,
And for I am bot a barayn thyng
Fro me is gone my husband.

So for þu me no childer sent
My husband now away es went,
Ded trow I best he be ;
& whore to fynd hym wate I noȝt
Þat he to beryng myght be broght,
Forþi full wo es me.
Þu knawes my will my god so mylde
Þat yf þow had sent me a childe
It suld be offred to þe.

An angel appears to Anne and promises her a child.

W*ith* þat an angell come fra heuen
& spak to hir w*ith* ful mild steuen
Þis worde under þat tre :

Anna, drede þow þe no dele,
For god has herd þi prayer wele
& sothely I þe say
Þi brith *in* gods awn counsel is,
& it sall be to more & lesse
Wo*n*derful eue*r* & ay ;
Þ*er*fore of his sande hald þe payd.
& qwe*n* þe angell þ*us* hade sayde
He wanyst sone away.
Anna of þis sight was adrede
& fore his worde sho ȝede to bede ;
Þ*er* *in* hyr pr*a*res lay.

Day and nyght praiand lay sho.
At last a maydy*n* sho called hir to
& said, lufed þu me oght
So as þu sese me þusgate lye
Als a wydow full drerylye
þu suld of me haue thoght.
Sho said : yf god þi wambe haf closed
Fro child beryng & þu haues losed
þi husband, blame me no3t.
At þat word anna thoght ryght yll.
Scho turnyd & lay wepand full styll—
Of god sho sok*our* soght.

[fol. 187*a*]

An angel appears to Joachim and repeats the promise made to Anne.

þ*at* tyme als anna lay *in* were
A yhonge child þ*an* gon apere
To Ioachim on a hyll
þ*er* he ys bestes kepyd wild & tame
& sayd : syr, why gas þu no3t hame
To þe wyf? For what skyll?
He sayd, me lykes nothyng hyr game.
For xxti 3ere we haue bene same
& it is no3tht gods wyll
To sende us childre us aboute ;
þ*er*fore þe temple I was dryu*n*e oute,
For shame þ*at* lykes me yll.

Whareto þ*er*fore suld I hame wende?
My neghburs for shame wil me shende
þis thyng so wel is kend.
Sen I was so fro þe tempel broght,
Here w*ith* my bestes þan haue I thoght
All my lyfetyme to lend.
N*euer* þe lesse ay whils I lyfe
Off my gudes I sall gar gyffe
Be my awn s*er*uandes hende
To pou*re* men þ*at* þ*er* god þam dredes
& þat in þe temple synges & redes.
þ*er* partes I sall þ*am* sende.

When he had sayd so, þis gude ma*n*,
þ*at* ylke yhong child appered þan
To hy*m* a fayre angell

Sayd : Ioachym of þe blode of Iuda,
I am comen fro þi wyfe anna
& comfored hyr I þe tell.
Als I sayde hyr, I say þe here
þat scho sall bere a doghter dere ;
In hyr þe halygast sall dwell
& in godis temple fayrest þat fre
Blessed ouer all women sall be
And of all gudnes þe well

So þat all þis wyde world I wene
Sall say per was neuer none swylk sene
Befor hyr far or nere.
Ane lyke to hyr sall neuer be none
Of woman kynde in blode ne bone
& perfore with gude chere
Haste þe to hyr þi selfe to saue ;
Ffor in hyr wambe sal þu fynd hir haue
þat I haue sayde þe here
Goddes gudnesse, þat blissed sede,
& scho modyr withouten drede
Of þat blyssed byrth so dere.

Joachim thanks the angel and makes a burnt offering.

Ioachym thankyd hym in þat place :
& sen þow has broght me grace,
Cum sitt with me & ette,
[fol. 187b] And als þi seruand here blysse þu me.
He sayd, þan bathe seruaundys er we
Of god whas grace es grett ;
& herdly man lyfs none so gude
þat es of powere to se oure fude,
For invisible es my mete.
Bot what þow wald for ordan,
Offer it to god here in þis playn
& byrn it with grete hete.

He answerde & sayd on þis wyse :
To god dere I make no sacrifyse
Bot at þi comhandment.
þe angell answerde unto hym per
& saide : goddes wille & it noȝt war
To þe wer I noȝt sent.

Þe beste lame þat he had he toke
& offerd it *þer* als says þe boke
  Hertly *with* gude intente;
& als þe fyre was brynnand bryght,
In þe low þare befor his syght
  To heuen þe angell went*e*.

Joachim falls in a swoon.

Þan Ioachim fell down in a sweyme.
Fra undron unto euensang tyme
  I*n* hys prayrs he lay
So þat hys herdmen in þat stede
Wende all wele he hade bene dede
  & wakend hym son þat day.
Þe syght þat he had herde & sene
When he had told þam all bedene
  Fful fast þan conseld þai
To anna þat he suld hym haste
Ffor drede of god þat he lufd maste—
  Þus redd þai hym alway.

The angel tells Joachim to return home.

Ioachym wyste-neuer what was beste
Bot fell oft doun & toke hys reste
  Als man þat had bene lame.
Þe angell appered to hym efte
& sayde: ryse upe, for I am belefte
  At kepe þe oute of blame;
Ffor god has herde ȝowr prayers bath.
Ryse up sikyrly, it hys no wath,
  To anna hy þe hame.
He rayse & tolde hys men þat tale.
Þa answerd þam with voce all hale
  And conseld hym to do þe same.

The angel reappears to Anne.

[fol. 188*a*]

Iochachim hamward þan gan he draw
With hys bestes bot a pase ryght slaw.
  Ne xxti days he ȝode
& pastured þam all wele be þe way.
Þe angell to anna gune say,
  Rys up now with myld mode;
Þi husband comes here in gude state;
Go kepe hyn at þe gylden ȝhate.
  Þan rase þat frely fode,

& hyr maydens þan be hyr side.
Ffull lang hir thoght scho gun abide
In þat ȝhat als sho stode.

Joachim and Anne meet at the golden gate.

When scho hym saw scho was all blyth
& went agayn hym þan full swyth
With hir maydyns infere.
Scho halsed hym fast about þe neke
& kyssed hym sayand, I ne reke
On lyf, I haue ȝow here.
I was a wedow in my lyfe,
Now loue I god I am a wyfe ;
Lo goddes help ay es nere.
Barren I was & I ne wyst how,
Bot se I haue consawed now
& þerfore make gud chere.

Hame þai went þan bath togeder
& many of þer kyn sone come þider
For glad of þis tythyng ;
So dede all þat þerof harde tell
Thurghowtt þe land of Israell
Als fere as word myght spryng.
All made þai myrth þat þerof mende,
& qwen þe ix monethes was com to ende
Anna þat blystful thyng

Mary is born.

Scho bare a mayden of hyr body.
To name þai called þat childe mary ;
Þer blyssed be þat beryng.

Anna of hyr doghter was full glade,
& Ioachym also gret lykyng hade.
Ffull tenderly þai hyr fed
& wande hyr when scho was thre ȝere.

Mary is presented at the temple.

With other damsels þaym was dere
To þe temple þai hyr led.
When þai unto þe temple war comen,
Þair best clothes with þam had þai nomen
Þat þai suld be in cled
Ffor to make þar sacrafys
As in þar law was þan þe gyse,
Þer god so sore þai dred.

Bot xv greces þan stude yt hegh
Þe temple or þai suld yt negh
Standand bothe est & west;
To schyfte þer cloythes wyls þat þai ȝode
Sett mare þat frely fode
Att grece fote hyr to reste.
Witoutyn helpe of erthly man
To þe temple allone scho wan,
So gracyous was þat geste.
Þe bysshopes sone þat child þai fand
In þat temple allone knelande
And wonder þam what was beste.

She goes alone up the fifteen steps and is found praying in the temple.

Þer xv greces so lang and brade
In þe honor of þe xv psalmes was made
Þat þis childe wente up by.
Anna come þan & mary myste;
Whore scho sulde fynd hyr noȝt scho wyste
Bot ran up hastyly,
& in þe tempell scho fande hyr þar
Kneland als scho a woman ware
Prayand deuoutly.
Ylk man had wonder it myght be so,
Sayde yt may be tyll us and mo
A mariage here of mary.

[fol. 188b]

Anna before þe pepyll most
Ffulfilled þan of þe halygost
Oppenly þus scho prayde:
Lorde gode in trynyte
Þat ys & was & ay sall be,
Of þe grace þu me prauayde.
I thank þe, lorde, bath lowd & styll,
For þu knawes ylk man hert & wyll
& how our ennemys sayde
Offrand to þe we suld non make.
Now es it sene þat for our sake
Þat lorde full law is layde.

Anne offers a prayer of thanks.

Ioachym, þat wele lyfand man,
& anna before þe pepyll þan
To þe bysshopes of þe law

Mary is dedicated to God's service and left in the temple

Sayd both togyder upon þis wyse :
We offer up here to goddes servyse
Oure child our god to knawe
& to serue als we haue hith.
Þe bisshops wer glad of *þat* syght.
Þer þai stod all on rawe
& merualyd *þat* so ȝohng a thyng
All hyr werkys to goddes plesyng
So sone couth dresse & drawe.

When þis was done anna hame wente,
& Ioachym yhode hys bestys to tente
Þer þai wer on þe felde.
Thurghoute þe lande of Israell
Als fare als þai hard tell
Come þider & hyr behelde
& m*er*ualyd gretly of hyr dedys
How *þat* so ȝonge a chyld wald nedys
Goddes werkes haue in welde,
For of hyr bedys was scho neu*er* yrke,
& als a woma*n* þan wald scho wyrke.
Be *þat* scho was v ȝere held.

Her manner of life in the temple.

Þus mary encresed more & more
Amang all þas vyrgyns *þat* *þer* wore
In þe temple day & nyght.
On þis wyse ordard scho hyr tyme :
Ffro morne arly unto hegh p*ri*me
To pray scho was full lyght ;
& so fro p*ri*meward unto none
Sylk & purpur sewed scho sone,
Couth none so wele it dyght.
* * * * * *
* * * * * *
* * * * *

[fol. 189*a*]

Of all þe vyrgyns *þat* scho w*ith* lered.
Sythen an angell to hyr apperede
At none ylke day be day
& fede hyr ay whils hir gud thoght ;
Þe mett *þat* other me*n* to hir broght
To poure folke gayf scho yt ay.

In gude thewes was scho plentyuouse
& neu*er* wroght bot ay gracyuose
So myk als I þow say
*Þa*t all þat any seknes hade
& towched hyr þai myght be glade,
For hale þai went away.

Whoso honoured hyr anythyng
Or haylsed hyr at hyr metyng,
Als many on oft sythes did,
Scho thankyd god ay of þat doyng
& answerde þam to goddes louyng
Als efte as yt betyde;
& qwen any of hyr felawes
Legh or sayd any wanton sawes,
Myldly wald scho þ*a*m bidd:
Þes damaysels þ*er* sawes er no3t gud,
Ffor goddes lar & 3e understode
Swilke dedes suld ay be hyd.

Þis v*yr*gyn gudnes sprang so wyde
Þat þ*er* was neu*er* none on na syde
Byfor hyr born, I wene,
So mylde in g*ra*ce and all gudnes,
Ne sall be after hyr neu*er*þelesse;
Euen lik to hyr be sene.
Ffor hyr gudnes & gret bewte
Abathar prest of þe lawe went he
To þe bisshopes all bedene
& bad gret gyftys to haue mary
To hys sone þat was semely
Weddid yf þai myght bene.

Be þ*a*t tyme was scho xii yhere olde,
& als þe lagh and custom walde
All þe v*er*gyns þ*a*t ware
In þe temple at þat full elde
Suld take þ*a*m husb*a*ndes þ*a*m to welde
For nothyng suld þai spare.
& for mary suld no3t be betrayde
Þe bysshops a gret consayll p*er*uade
In þe temple of les & mare.

Abathar the priest wishes Mary to marry his son.

When Mary is twelve, the priests advise her to choose a husband. She refuses.

Of ysraell come all þe best blode
Before þam all qwar mary stode;
þe bysshops moneste hyr þare
þat scho sulde take hyr a husbande,
Ane of þe best en all þat lande,
Chese hyr sum gud manchilde.
þi frendes & ylke man þat here es
Aredes þam elles for þi fayrnes
þat þu sall be begy(l)de.
Mary answerde þam full sone:
Late be, syrys, it may noȝt be done
þat I suld wax so wyld
[fol. 189b] To knawe a husbande noȝ ȝyt he me.
I haue gyfne myn vyrgynyte
To god at kep unfylde,
& þerfore certys I sall assay
At kepe in clennesse yf I may
To hym maydenhede.
One sayd þan: lang er þu was born
Other vergyns dyd so þe beforne,
þer lyfys lely to lede
In matremonie to fullfill þe law.
Fore þe, damoisell, do so þe awe
Elles comes of þe no sede,
& perauenture some ȝohng man
Ffor þi bewte sall begyle þe þan
So sall þu lese þi mede.

Mary defends her refusal to marry.

Scho answerde hym þan full myldly
& sayd: seruay here ensempyll why
Als ȝe may wrytyn se.
Abell þat cursyd kayn slogh
Lyfs now in heuen with yoy enoght,
And two corones haues he:
One had he for hys martyrdom;
Another he had hym best becom
Ffor hys vergynte.
And Ely ravyst to heuen þan es
For he keped hym in clennesse;
Swylk grace may god send me.

All men had wonder þat þer were
Off mary wordes & hyr answere;
Gaynsay hyr couth þai noȝt.
Þe bysshop abaythar up ras þan;
Into a pulpit he wan þan
Als he wald preche þam thoght.
He command þat all folk suld be styll
To tyme þat he had said hys wyll.
Þis mater forth he broght:
Þe foles of fayth to trow untrew
Sen þat þis tempyll was fyrst mad new
& thurgh wyse salams wroght

Haues vergyns & maydens dwelt herein,
Som kyng doghters, comlyest of kyne,
Þat ouerwhare war dwelland;
Som byshops þat in our law wer gude,
& som of prestes, & som of þe best blode
Þat was in all þis land;
& qwen þai were at þe full age,
Þai were þan put to maryage
In lele wedlak to stande.
Bot mary forsakyd now þat degre;
Þerfor emang us I rede it be
To kep hir here ordand

Þat scho with no man be dessauyd.
All other purpos sone was wayfed;
Hereto assent þai all,
& kest lotes þan als I ȝow tell
Emang þe xii tribus of Israell
To wham mary suld fall.
On Iuda fell þat lote at laste.
Þe prest þan of þe trybe als faste
Befor hym ded he call
All men þat war unweddid þan
& oppenly byfor ylke man
Charged both gret & small

On þe morne þat þai suld ald & yhyng
Euer ylkon to þe tempyll bryng
Þe yherd of a vyne tre.

Abathar recommends that she be kept in the temple.

[fol. 190a]

The twelve tribes of Israel cast lots for Mary.

She falls to Juda.

The men of Juda are ordered to present rods at the temple altar.

Þai went all hame þe yherdys to dight,
& Iosep, þat ald man noȝt lyght,
Þat tyme no wyf had he.
Goddes byddyng wald he noȝt dispise
Bot dight hym a yherd on hys wysse
Emang ȝong men to be
To bere hys yherde als all other dide.
& þat nyght thus gate yt betidde
With þe byshop of þat countre.

God spak to hym als I say ȝhowe
& sayd: Isachar, I byde þe now
Tomorne be tyme of day
Þe men with þe þer yherdes when þat þai er come
Unto my place of sancta sanctorum
On þe autre þu þam lay.
Als þare offrand yow lay þam þare
& byd þe folke þat þai noght spare
Þat day & nyght to pray.
On þe morne put þe yherdes in þe handes,
& in qwhilke yherde þis selkouth standes
Gyf hym mary alway.

Mary is to be married to the man whose rod bears nuts.

Þis sygne & selkuoth sall be þere:
A yherde sall burgeon & nutes bere
Befor ȝow in ȝowr syght;
& oute of þe heghest of þat wande
A qwyte douyfe sall þu se flyande
Up into heuen ful ryght:
Gyffe mary to hym þat þis yherd beres.
When he had herd þis with hys eres,
To do ytt he was ful lyght.
Þe bysshop hereof was noȝt afered;
On þe morne ylke man he gayf his yherde
Saue on wanted a wyght;

Joseph has no rod and no token is shown.

& þat was Iosep witouten doute,
For he was all þe folke without.
As he þerof ne roght
He stode & lened hym on hys croch,
For who hys yhered wald tak & tuch
Þerof gayf he ryght noȝt.

Neuerþelesse for all þe fayre
Oute of no yherede þat þan was þer
Sygne was sene ne wroght.
To þe byshope þan an angell spake;
Bad hym þat yhered he suld up take
And gyf it hym þat it broght.

Att þat worde up þe yherde he toke [fol. 190b]
And faste aboute hym gon he loke
Als hym thoght was gret nede.
He saw þat Iosep yherd hade none, Joseph is given his rod, and it bears nuts.
& to þe tempell hade he broght one,
Fforþi to hym he ȝhede.
Þat yherd to Iosep þan gayfe he,
& spryngand began it son to be
Wit nottes ful fayre to sprede.
A qwhite douyf þeroute als gon flegh
Þat wonder all þat þis syght þer seigh,
Bot Iosep ȝyt had moste drede.

Ffor ferde þe byshop suld hym blame Joseph is chosen as husband for Mary, but he refuses to marry.
Iosep couth speke no wrode for shame,
Bot stode & lokyd myldly.
Þe bysshop & all þat hym behelde
Sayd: man, þou erte blist in þine elde,
Fful wele es þe forthy;
Of god allone þu es chosen here
To haue þis damysell þat us es dere
Att wede hyr oppynly.
He sayde to þam: for shame lat be,
What suld a yhong wench do with me?
My banes er old & dry.

& god haues sent me childre also;
Þerfore wyfys will I haue no mo;
Lat sum ȝong man hyr take.
Þai luf me lytell þat to hyr redes;
I had mare nede to byd me bedes
Amendes for my mys to make.
Abathar þan to hym gon drawe, The priest pleads with Joseph, and he agrees to the marriage.
Þe gretteste byshope of þe lawe,
Bad Iosep thynk on þe wrake

God toke of satan and abyron
& þose þat felle þam thre apon
For þai his sande wald forsake;

Þerfore luke þat þu be nott shent
Iff þu dispyes þis commandement
Oure byddyng to fulfyll.
Iosep answerd þan on þis wyse:
Godes byddyng wil I noȝt dispise,
For I am lowed & still
Redy at do þat ȝe commande.

The bishop gives Mary to Joseph.

Þe bishop toke hym þan be þe hand,
Mary he gayf hym tyll
& bad hym lede with hyr hys lyfe
In lele matremony als with his wyfe,
For certes yt was godes wyll.

Mary is given five virgins for company—their work.

& for hyr solace & hyr game
Ffyue virgnis sal be with ȝou same,
Þe best in al þis place.
Iosep was noȝt contraryus
Bot led þam hame þan to hys huse,
& þer within a space
He dight a fayre chambre belyue
Ffor mary and þas vergynis fyue
Þat was so fayre of face
[fol. 191*a*] Þat þai myght in þer disporte,
Bot most to make mary comforte
He kest hym in þis case.

& unto ylk man Iosep sayde
Of mary þat he held hym payde
& wele wold he hyr tente;
With hyr fyue vergyns to be hyr by
At kepe hyr fra euell company
Þus þat hold man mente.
All þas v maydens had swilk merkys
Þat ylkone of þam wroght sere werkys,
Swylke grace had god þam sent.
Þe name of þas v I vnderstande
Als we in þe boke þam wreten fande
Herkens with gude entent.

Gentea & sophora hyght þe twa,
Sussanna and albigia,
  Þe fyfte hyght agabell.
Ilkon wroght sere werk als we fynde;
One wroght grene silk, anoþer Inde,
  Þe thryd whyte so her fell.
Þe forte wroght bysse; þe v wroght lyne;
& mary wroght werke þat was most fyne,
  All propure soth to tell
Ffor it was best wroght of entayle
Þai ordand it for gods tempell wale
  Þer þai befor gon dwell.

& for it was werk most of pryse
Passand all silke werke or bysse
  Þe damsels had dedeygne
Þat scho wroght propure more þan þai.
& so befell it apon a day
  On of þam gon her pleyne
& sayd: kynges doghters all v. er we,
Lo scho werkys passand oure degre
  Þat scho may noȝt atteyne.
Þai sayd all fyue: þe soth es sene
Scho castes hyr for to be oure qwhene.
  Swylk falsed gon þai seyne.

The virgins become envious of Mary.

Þus qwene on skorne þai callyd hyr þer;
Bot mary writthed hyr neuer þe mare,
  Ful fast prayand scho stude;
& als þai spak her of all fyue
Ane angell appered to þam belyue
  Sayd: fules, ȝe can no gude.
Þis þat ȝe sp(a)ke so scornandly
Sall be fulfylled thurgh prophecy
  In mary, þat frely fude,
& ȝowr qwhene sall scho be algate
Passand all (q)whenes in ylka state.
  With þat þe angell ȝowde.

An angel rebukes the virgins.

Qwhen þe vergynis all v. hard þis
Þai wyste wele þat þai sayd of mys
  & mary þai hasked mercy,

& scho fogafe þam onone ryght;
Bot on þe morne appered in þer syght
  Þe angell all openly.

The angel tells Mary she shall bear the light of the world. [fol. 191b]

He sayd: mary, blyssed mot þu be,
Ffor lyght sall com fro heuen to þe
  & ryst in þi body.
In þi wambe ys goddes dwellyng made
Þat sall lyght þis world wyde & brade.
  Herof þas thoght ferly.

Mary thankyd god with myght & mayn
& yohode to hyr prayers agayne.
  Lo gabrell soth to say

Gabriel greets Mary and tells her she shall bear God's son.

On þe morne appered before hyr face
& said: mary full of grace,
  God ys with þe þis day.
Of all women blyssede be yhow
& þe frute þat in þi wombe ys now,
  Blessed be it ever & ay.
When mary had þis herde & sene
Scho thoght in hyr hert what may þis mene,
  For ferd scho qwake allway.

Þe angell sayd: mary, dred þe noȝth.
Þe grace þat þu so lange haues soght
  In god has fon it clere.
Be you sall consaue withouten syn
& bere a child þu clere virgyn,
  Ihesus is name is here.
He sall be gret & goddes son calde;
Hys fader sall gyf hym þe see to hald
  Of david þat is hym dere.
In þe huse of Iacob þan sall he lende
& regne in heuen withouten ende
  & in erth fer & nere.

Mary þan to þe angell sayde:
How suld þis thyng on me be layde
  & man knew I neuer none?
To þis þe anngell þan answerd he
& sayd: þe halygost sall light in þe,
  Umlap þe blod & bone.

On þe sall born be goddes awn child,
& se eliȝabeth, þi cosyne so mylde,
Sex monethes ys yt now gone.
Þai called hyr baran *in* toun & felde,
Now haves scho consaued *in* hyr elde
Of goddes gret *grace* allone.

Nothyng impossible may be forthy
To god; *þer*fore dred þe noȝth, mary;
Þu has co*n*saued þy son.
Mary hy*m* answerd wit*h* myld chere,
Goddes awn handmayde*n* es me here;
Als he wyll be yt don.
Þe angell up to heuen fleigh þan,
& mary pr*a*yed als scho began
To god sittand *in* trone.
Þe angell ylke day br(o)ght hyr meet.
Within a whyle scho wox ryght gret;
Hyr gudnes wyst bot fone.

Leue we now mary *in* gude name
& speke of Iosep þ*a*t was fro hame
Lyfand *in* mykil thoght.
Yf he were alde & nothyng lyghte,
Þe boke says þ*a*t he was awryght
& trewerke allway wroght.
Als lang als he fro mary was
Neu*er*þelesse no day suld hy*m* passe
Þ*a*t his s*er*ua*n*d þan broght
To þe v*er*gnis all þ*a*t þ*a*m sull fall [fol. 192*a*]
At ete or drynk or wirk wit*h* all
So þ*a*t þam lakkid ryght noght.

Joseph returns home and finds Mary with child. He rebukes the virgins for deceiving him.

Be scho was fully fyftene ȝere
Scho had co*n*saued þ*a*t derling dere
& þan it þus betid:
Whe*n* hyr neyne monethes ware nere att ende,
Iosepe dreste hym home to wende,
At loke qwhat mary did.
Þe fyue v*er*gnis at þ*er* werke he fande,
& mary at hyr boke prayhande
Als fast scho myght bid.

Scho rase up myldly hym agayne
& of hyr wambe was he noȝt fayne,
Bot it myght noȝt be hid;
For qwen he saw þat it was so grete,
All þe fyue vergnis fast gon he threte
& lowd began to cry.
He fell done & thus gate he sayde:
What happ, lord, has þu for me layde?
So ald a man als I
Sall now haue more shame & more anger;
Lord, lat me are lyfe no longere
Bot dight me here to dy.
& damoyselles, he sayd, wo yow be,
Ffalsly have ȝe dessauede me;
So haue ȝe don mary.

The virgins defend themselves and say that only an angel has spoken with Mary.

Þe vergnis sayd to Iosepe þan:
Wayt ȝe wele to hyr come na man
At wayt hyr with non ylle,
& we wyll witnesse þis allway;
We partes neuer fro hyr nyght ne day
Ne scho neuer lowd ne styll
Spake neuer with no man in þere wones,
Bot ylke day come an angell ones
& fed hyr all hyr fyll.
So all þe mete þat ȝe hyr sent
To powre folke gayf scho it verement,
Þis witnesse ay we wyll;
Þerfore suppose none ille so sone,
Ffor we wate neuer how yt myght be done
With hir any maner of syn,
Ffor other þan þe angell spake with hir none;
& þerfore þe holygoste allone
We trow light hir within
& þat has mad hyr wambe so hegh.

Joseph is not convinced and plans to steal away.

He sayd: damoiselles, ȝe er full slegh;
I trow ȝou not lefe ȝour dyn.
Ȝe say þan þe angell made hir with child;
Nay, sum lyke an angell has hyr begiled,
A ȝong man with sum gyn,

& I wende scho hade bene syker *with* ȝow.
What me ys best wate I noght now,
I wax als heuy as led;
& I dare loke no man in þe face,
In þe tempyll no *in* na place.
For shame why ne were I ded?
He sayd þus sighand sythes fele
& sithen he thoght fro hyr to stele
Into sum uncouth steed.
& als he *þer*to wald hym dyght [fol. 192b]
Þe angell appered to hym *þat* nyght,
Bad: Iosep, turn þi red — An angel corrects Joseph and bids him return to Mary.
& dred ye nogthyng of þis lyf
For to take mary to þi wyf
Ne thynke *with* hyr no shame.
Þe child *þat* scho sall bere *in* hast
Scho has consayued thurgh þe halygast,
& jhesus sall be hys name,
Gret gods awn power sall haue
All hys folke fra syn to saue
Þat adam broght *in* blame.
Iosep at morne he went belyue
To mary & to þis vergnis fyue
& told *þam* all þis same.

He thankyd god & was full glad,
Bot of þe suspecion he to *þam* had
He asked mary forgayfnes.
* * * * *
* * * * *
* * * * *

All þe folke *þat* dwelled *þer* abowte — The people accuse Joseph of beguiling Mary.
Had merwelle & ware in gret dowte
& wondreth bor mor & lesse
Þat mary was so grete *with* childe,
& sayd yf þat scho ware begilde
Iosep to blame most esse.

Þai wreghyd hym all for *þam* yll thoght;
Syne before abythar þai Iosep broght
Was byshop of þe lawe.

He charged hym fast of þat doynge
& how mary, þat blystful thynge,
Wald any fleschly knawe,
Ffor on hyr wombe it es now sene.
Iosep swore fast & mad hym clene,
To god gon witnesse drawe
þat he neuer with wyll hyr knew ne wyst
So mekyll þat scho a man aues kyst;
Þis was allway his sawe.

Þe bishop sayde, how consaued scho þan?
Thurgh þe or els sum other man
Lost scho hyr maydynhed.
Iosep sayd, ȝe sall all wele wytt
þat scho ys clene vergyn ȝytt
Boyth in thoght & dede.
& many other prestes þat þare wasse
Sayd: sȯ lyghtly sall þu noȝt passe,
With swilke lyrtes us lede.
A maner of watyr þai had þerfore
In þe tempyll was kepyd in store
For thyng þat was in drede

Joseph drinks the water of purification and proves himself innocent.

þat whoso ware of a thyng gilty
& drank þerof suld haue oppenly
A gret spot in hys face.
þai gar hym drynke þar he stode
Sythen seuen sythes about he ȝhode
Þe awter in þat space,
& spot ne sygne couth þai fynde none.
Þe bysshop & prestes sayd þan ylkone:
Þu ert blist in þis place,
Ffor we can fynd in þe no blame.
þai callyd mary þan, bad hym go hame,
Opposed hyr in þis cace.

[fol. 193a]

The bishop urges Mary to confess with whom she has sinned.

Sayd, sen Iosep has made hym clene of þe,
Tell me, þi bisshop, who yt may be
Þu gos so gret withall,
Ffor fayrer yt es in schryfte to tell
Þe soyth how þat þis chaunce befell
Þan gods wrake on þe fall.

Scho sayd : yf any unclennes
Of fleshly syn or wykkidnes
  Be *in* me, gret or small,
I p*ray* to god he shew yt here ;
& als he wote þ*at* I am clere
  Hys help hertly I call.

Þai wald assay hyr ȝyt neu*er* þe latt*er*,
& did mary drynk of þe water
  Þ*at* Iosep drank of before.
To drynk þarof had scho na drede,
& boute þe auter sithen scho ȝede
  Seuen sythes w*ith*outen more.
Whe*n* þai no signe *in* hyr face couth se,
Þe bysshop sayde : how may þis be ?
  & other wys me*n* of lore,
Mary es wreyghed here wrangwusly.
Some says itt semes done for envy,
  Þ*at* may þam rewe sore.

Mary proves her innocence by drinking the water of purification.

Lorde god, scho sayd, þu wote full wele,
Ffor yow my doyng knawes ylke dele,
  Þ*at* ma*n* me neu*er* ȝyt knewe
& þat I lufed sen my childhede
At kepe to þe my maydenhede
  I*n* clennes gude & trewe.
Þe bysshop & prestes both old & ȝhyng
Askyd mary forgyfnes of þ*er* doyng,
  Ffor sore it gon þ*am* rewe ;
& scho forgayf þam ev*er* ylke a man.
To Iosep þai lede hyre þan
  W*ith* ioy & myrth enowe.

Mary forgives her accuser and returns to Anne, her mother.

& þ*er* a whyle þai dwelte all same
& made mary desport & game
  All þ*at* þai couth or myght.
To anna hyr moder sythen þai hir lede,
& scho þam all full frendly ffede.
  Ffor wersehyp of þ*at* wyght
Þai sayde : anna, blysed be yow
Þat swylke a doghter born had now
  Þ*at* þe halygast wald *in* lyght,

Ffor þe child þat sall of hyr be borne
Sall saue þe folke þat suld be lorne;
Loved be he day & nyght.

Besyde Ier(usa)lem þis thyng befell
In galile in þe lande of Israell
Þer mary was dwelland.

Cæsar Augustus inaugurates the head-pence.

& aftyr a whyle þan was yt þus :
Þe kyng sesar augustus
Gart ordayn thurghout his lande,
Ffor he wald all hys pepyll knaw
What nowmbre he myght to hym draw
Yf þat hym nede sulld stand,
Þat þai suld pay for ylke a heued
A peny; þat nane behynd were leued
He did cry & command.

[fol. 193b]

And þat ilke man in hys awne cyte
Suld pay † anowre, þan þer mone,
Of payn of gret pyne
Als it before þat tyme was made.
With hym þan þe kyngdom hade
Of sery syr Egryne.
When Iosep hade herd þe kynges cry,
He spake þan unto mylde mary
& saide : leve doghter myne,
Me bus wende now bedlem unto
At pay þe als our neighboures do;
*Þer*fore heygh we us heyne.

Mary sayde : I am at ȝowre wyll
To wende with ȝow als it hys skyll
In bedlem for to dwell.

Joseph and Mary start to Bethlehem to pay their head-pence.

Iosep toke his childer towo,
A ȝhong damysell & no mo
O menȝhe soyth to tell.
He drest hym & trussed same al hys ger
And toke hy(s) asse mary to ber
Full fayre oure fyrth & fell.
Hys ox drafe he als to þat entent
What tyme þat þer spendyng was wente
Þe ox þat he myght sell.

And als þai welke fourth be þe way
Mary gon to Iosep say:
Behold, syr, qwhat I se.
Two maner of folke es us before;
Þe tane makes ioy, þe tother wepes sore,
Aythe*r* i*n* þe*r* degre.
Iosep ȝhode hyr þland be þe strete,
Sayd: I se no folke þat us sall mete
Ne noȝtht bot fewle of tre.
Leue doghter, ȝow begynnes to fone;
Þerfore I pray þe þat yow ryde one
& latt swylk folys be.

Mary sees a vision of joyful and sorrowful people who will meet them. Joseph sees no people and accuses Mary of folly.

Ane angell appered clede all i*n* wythe
& sayde unto Iosep als tytte
Be þe way als he ȝohude,
Bad hym speke noght so to mary
Ne call hyr wordes wordes of foly,
For he saw hyr saw was gude.
A folk of Iewes sho saw þat muraned;
Some tyme were guide & now her turaned
Fro god als þai wer wode.
Another folke of paenys scho saw
War some tyme ille & now þai draw
To god with ioy full mode.

An angel rebukes Joseph and interprets the vision.

& so þe wordes þat grett god spake
To habraham, jacob, & to Isake
Er now fulfyld i*n*dede;
Þe blyssyng þat god þam gaf & hyght
Sall be now done thurgh his grett myght
& shewed i*n* habrahams sede.
Þis & wele more þe angell sayde,
& Iosep anone eres þerto layde,
Bot to þe toun wald hym spede.
& er þai come att any town
He bad Iosep take mary doun;
No ferer sul he hir led,

[fol. 194*a*]

Ffor gret gode has hir tyme now sett
Þat scho sall bere withoutene lett
* * * * *

* * * * * * 964
* * * * * *

& scho gods son of heuen.
Iosep sayd : anngell, bot may scho noȝt
Ffyrste untill a town be broght? 968
Joseph leaves Mary in a cave and goes in search of midwives
Þe anngell said *with* myld steuenen :
Þis *cer*ten scho may noȝt passe ;
Bot here ys a cafe *þat* sum*t*ym wasse
For lyons sex or seuen. 972

Now es Iosep to þe town wente
At bryng to mary has he mente
A medwyf yf he myght.
& þe boke says *þat* two he gatt ; 976
Ȝebell certes þe tone scho hatt,
Þe totyhr salome hyght.
& mary es went into þe cafe
& þe anngell *with* hyr to kep hir safe 980
& comfortht hyr day & nyght.
No lyght for darke myght *þer*to wyn,
Bot sone when mary was com*m*e yn
Yt was all lem*m*ad lygtht. 984

Ynto þe cafe ȝhede none bot þas two,
Bot of anngells come many one mo
Gret multitud to þa*m* *þer*.
Thurgh þe myght of god *þat* es maste, 988
Christ is born in a cave.
And also grace of þe halygaste,
Gods awn dere child scho bar*e*
W*i*touten wembe of any syn,
& scho *in* þe byrth a clene v*er*gyn 992
Before & after þar.
So *with* hym *þer* ys p*er*sons thre
& bot one god in trynnyte,
This sall we trow eu*er* mare. 996

Joseph returns too late.
For Iosep was noȝt ful lyght of lym,
He rade & broght þe wemen *with* hym
Walkand ou*er* hygh & law.
So to þe cafe þai come at þe last, 1000
Bot enter ne durst þai noght for gast
So gret light *þer* þai saw.

Iosep ȝohod to mary þan,
Sayd, here er two mydwyfs *þat* can
  Of wome*n* *pr*euetes knaw;
& mary smyled. Laghes þu, sayd he.
He saw a knaue child on hyr kne.
  Þan sayde he: I was oue*r* slaw,

Bot certes, mary, I myght com ne are;
Neue*r*þelesse my cou*n*sels or þai fare
  Speke w*ith* þam boyth *in*fere
& shew þam þi *pr*euytes of þis dede
Þat yow no mydicyns hereafter nede,
  Ffor *þat* wald cost oue*r* dere.
Mary bad call þam hyder bath. [fol. 194b]
ȝebell entyrd, þe thother thoght layth, The mid-wives are astonished.
  Bot stude out all *in*were.
& ȝebell come & graped mary.
Lord god, scho sayde, mercy
  Þe syght *þat* I se here;

Here hys a me*r*uayll was neue*r* none swylke.
I felt hyr two pappes full of milke
  & a childe frely borne,
& wymbe of birth es here non sene;
Scho moder es als a mayden clene.
  Þis was neue*r* sene beforne.
To tell salome scho was full yhape;
& salome sayd, bot I hyr graype
  I hald þi salk bot scorne.
Whe*n* scho to grape mary was comen, Salome is punished for her doubt.
Hyr hend, hyr armes war all benomen.
  Allas, scho sayd, I am lorne.

Ffull wele I wote I haue done mys,
For my mystrowyng all haf I þis
  Þat I lyfed *in* a drede;
& god þu wote I lufed nyght & day
Wome*n* & chylder to help þam ay;
  Helpe now me *in* þis nede.
Gabrell bad hyr aske mary forgyfnes
And sayde, touche þe childe *þat* borne es, Christ heals Salome.
  Þu sall be hale gude spede.

Scho dyd sone als þe anngell bad
& was all hale; þan was scho glad
& loued god of þat dede.

These women went þan both bedene,
& all þat þai had herde or sene
þai told thurghout þe land;
& men & women trowed þam enew,
For þai halden wer ayther full trew
Boyth of tung and hand.
þe grete multitude of anngels bryght
þat had brogtht mary all þe lyght
Mad yoiful lowd syngnand;
A sang þat hali kyrke falles unto
Es gloria in excelsis deo,
þat es to understand

Angels sing Gloria.

Ioy be to god þat neuer sall sees,
In heuen & also in erth pees
To all men of gud wyll.
þis anngell sang was herd ful fare
So mykyll þat sere hyrdmen þat were
þat nyght apon a hyll
Wakand per bestes apon þe feld
Lukyd all up & þai beheld
A sterne standand full styll
Nerr þe erth & also hogely more
þan euer þai saw any other before;
Ffor ferde þai gaf þam yll.

[fol. 195a]

þe anngell sayde: hyrdmen, dred 3ow no3t
Of þis wonder þat here es wroght;
New tythand I 3ow bryng
þat ys ioy to yow & to þe pepyll all,
Ffor he ys borne þat saue 3ow sall
Mankynd bath old & 3yng
In a cafe under 3hone fayre sterne
Whare 3e sall se hym þer I 3ow werne;
þis tell I 3ow to takenyng
In bedelem sall he funden be,
& in a stabyll without þat cite
Es made now hys rystyng.

An angel directs the herdmen to the Christ child.

Þer in a cryb sall ȝe fynd hym ly
Betwyx ane ox & a asse myldly
Apon a lityll hay.
When þis was sayd þe anngell went;
Þe herdmen has þer harnes hent,
To bedlem toke þer way.
Be þat tyme had myld mary bene
So lange in þat ylke cafe I wene
Yt was þan þe thyrd day.
Iosep sett mary on hys asse
& toke hyr child als he swedild wasse;
To bedlem fast went þai.

Bot when þai come bedlem unto
So mekyll folke þer at do
Þer hed penys to pay þare
Þat all þe ynnes in þe ton were tane;
So Iosep myght gett herber nane;
Fforþi hys hert was sare.
At þe touns ende bitwix twa walles
Fand he made both crybbes & stalles,
For uther bestes standyng ware.
He tok myld mary doun full softe
& layd hyr child in a manger o lofte;
Þis was bot symple fare.

In þat place als þe story says
Ware þai all herberd thre days,
For better myght þai noȝt do.
Þe ox and þe asse boyth Iosep fest
At a manger als hym thoght best
& gayf þam hay at ette.
Oȝ þat same hay he layd þat childe
Whils þat he dryst for mary mylde
A stra couche for hir sett.
Þe ox & þe as þai bath knelid doun
& honored þat child with breth & soun;
Þis was a meruyll grett.

Þe hirdmen held forthe ay þer pase.
At þe laste þai come unto þis place
Þer þai were herbard all.

Joseph Mary find no lodging except in stable.

The beasts kneel to Christ.

The herdmen honour Him.

When þai fand as þe anngell sayd,
Þai honored þat child & held þam payd
Þer he lay be þe wall.
When þai had done þai went þer way
& lefte þe childe liggand on þe hay
Bytwene þe bestes in þe stall.
Þe boke says þat hay fra bedlem
Sant Elan broght to Ierslem;
Se þer ytt men sall.

[fol. 195b]

& in Rome þe same tym befell
The temple of Apollo falls.
Þe lordes & ryche men þat þer gun dwell
A gret temple gart make.
Þe werke þai wroght was gud & fyne
In honour of gode apolyne
Þat was a deuel ful blake.
When it was made þai askyd hym faste
How lang þat ylke tempyle suld laste
Sum taken of hym to take.
He gayf þam to answere þare
Unto a mayden a childe bare;
He sayd it suld neuer slake.

Þai held þis soyth & noght lesse
& called yt þan þe tempyll of pesse
To last withouten ende.
Bot þat same sononday as says þe boke
Þat cryste was borne it all to shoke
Wele wers þan euer þai wende.
Þe folk of Rome wyst wole þerby
Þan was fulfyllyd þe prophecy
Of crystys beryng & kende.
& þerof afterward garte þai wyrke
In honour of mylde mary a kyrke
All þer mysse to mende.

Many mo wondyrs war shewed þat nyght
Þat cryst was borne to proue þe ryght
Þat he was god and man.
At þis tyme leve wyll we.
Bot þe vij day of hyr natyuyte
Mary þat blyssyd woman

Hyr child into bedlem scho bare.
Þe viij day to circum*sicid* hym þare. 1160 The circumcision.
To se hym many one ran.
Iosep frendes comen to do þat ded;
Þe fyrste blod god for man gon bled
Þe boke says it was þan. 1164

When þai had done as þame awe
& with þe child fulfylled þe lawe
Þai named hym þer ihesus
As þe anngell had hym called beforn 1168
Ere euer he was consaved or borne;
Þe boke bers wytnes þus.
Bot after xxxij days
A wyse man of þe law þan says: 1172
Mary tak tent to us;
With Iosep frendes bus ihesus fare
Unto þe temple be offyrd þare,
& allway do þus þe bus. 1176

Ffor our law bids þus ouer all thyng
Þat ylke a woman eftyr hyr childyng
Ffourty day sall scho
Hyr husband bed allway forbere 1180 The Purification
& fro other dedes þat myght hyr dere
Þe tempyll þan cum to.
And eftyr sall scho puryfyed be
In token of clennes & chastite; 1184
On þis wyse sall ȝe do.
A pare of dowuys or a turtyll ȝe take [fol. 196a]
& go with hym offryng to make
Er ȝe take ryst or ro. 1188

Þe pryste of þe tempyll hyght symon;
So gret age was fallen hym apon
He was a C & x ȝhere. Simeon sees Christ.
When he of ihesus comyng harde; 1192
At þe tempyll ȝate þiderwarde
To kepe hym with gude chere
& toke þe child in hys armes two
& to þe auter wit hym gon go 1196
Hys folowyd infere.

He sayd: now leve þi *ser*uand, lord, *in* pees,
Ffor both myne eyne wit*h*outyn lesse
Has sene my saueo*ur* here,
Lyght to all folke for soyth to tell
& yoi to þe pepyll of Ysraell
Thurgh god ordand & dyght.
Þe ald ma*n* bare þe childe as he walde,
Bot þe child þan gouernd þe halde
& sayd to hym wele ryght.
Symeon said, me lyst leue full ylle
Forþi let me dye whe*n* it ys þi wylle,
Lord, sen I of þe has syght.
* * * * * *
* * * * * *
* * * * *
Þe masters and doctours of þe law
Be sere pr*o*phecies gon þai knaw
Þa*t* he was cry*s*t, god son,
Ffor of hys byrthe me*n* spak ful wyde
& mervelyd gretly on ylke a syde;
& so þai eue*r* mare mon.
Mary & Iosep þe*r*of ware fayn
& went to bedlem þa*n* agayn,
Drest þa*m* þe*r*i*n* to won.
Bot gabriell neue*r* more part fro hyr,
& Iosep for he yll myght styr
Wit þe*r* frendes most were fon.
When ih*esus* was fully two ȝere
Thre kynges war dwelland in co*n*treths sere,
Fful con*n*and me*n* of clergy.
& by a sterne þai saw all thre
How þat a ȝhong child borne suld be
& callyd kyng of jury.
To seke þa*t* child þai haue all thoght
Unwyttand ylkon of uther wroght
Thurgh þare astronomy.
& als god ilk ma*n* tyme has sett,
At þe water of cayres ylkon þai met
And shipped þer redely.

Three kings go in search of the Christ child.

When þai had ilkon understand
Þat þai were all boun to a land
& all to a dede
Þer war þai all thre glad of uther
& went forth ylkone uther brother
Als þe sterne gun þam lede.
Att þe last unto Ierslem comme þai,
& þer þai askyd wysmen alway:
Qwhare ys þat lord in lede
Þat hys now borne & jewes kyng?
We saw ys sterne in þe est shynyng
& we towene oure mede
Comys with ryche gyftes hym to offer. [fol. 196b]
Þe Jewes wer all gryued of þat propfer
& went with gret dispyte
To tell kynge herode how þat þai sayde.
Þan was he wode & wele were payde.
He did call þam thre als tyte
& askyd þam what þai wald bemene.
Þai sayd all thyng as þai had sene;
Þan had he sorow & sythe.
He sayd for 3owre tythyng god reste
& comand at serue þam of þe beste
To drynke boyth red & qwyte.
In þis men tyme herod dide call
Þe wysest men of þe Jewry all
To wit whare criste was borne.
Þai sayd all in bedleem Jude
Als 3e may in oure bokes se
Thurgh prophetes sayd befforne.
Ane sayd yn bedleem Jues land
Yf 3ow for lityll pris stande
& men thynke on þe skorne
Oute of þe sall sprynge & sprede
A duke þat sall þe pepyll lede
Of Israel þat was lorne.
We fynd wryten als þat a maydyn myld
Sall consavefe & bere a childe
In clene vergynyte.

Herod asks the meaning of the visit of the three kings.

Herod's counsellors tell him that the King of kings is born.

Þe prophetes says he sall be so gret
On his fader ryght hand sal be hys set
In heuen in þe heghest degre;
& of all lordes he sall be lorde
& bryng in ane þat were a dyscorde
His folke & make þam fre.
Besyde bedleem in þe land of Jury
Sall he be borne syr sykyrly
Þat kyng of kynges sall be.

He sayd, es it soth, wote ȝe wele?
Þai answerd, ȝa, lorde, ylka dele
& more yf ȝe take tent.

Herod plots against Christ.

Herod sayd þan with some wyle,
Bus me loke þat lad to begyle
& elles hald I me shent.
Þe thre kynges did he call forth þan.
He sayd: yf ȝe wyll seke þat ȝhon(g) man
Þat ȝe are while of ment
* * * * * *
* * * * * *
* * * * *

1296

With ryche offerandes unto hym wende.
Þus feyned he hym þer a fals frende
And thoght þat child to sla.
Þai held hys tale trew and gude
& toke þer leue all thre ande ȝhode,
Bot afterward fell yt swa:
One sayd alas, whare ys þe sterne

The star disappears from the three kings.

Þat suld us all boyth wysse & warne
To þe chyld how we suld ga?
Another sayd, wa worth ȝhone deuelles lym,
Ffor sene we went to speke wyth hym
The sterne ys past us fra.

[fol. 197*a*]

Þe thryd sayd, to god I rede we pray
Þat he wald to wysse us þe way
Sende us þe sterne agayne.

The star returns in answer to their prayer.

Unnethes had þai þat prayer made
Þat þai þareof all gude syght hade
Ffor soyth þan ware þai fayne.

When þai say ytt stand and reste,
Þai sayd & be þare clergy keste
  Trewly *with*owten trayne
Þe huse þat ȝhon sterne stan*d*es abouen,
Þar hys þat lorde of grett renown ;
  Us þar no ferrer ffrayne.

& when þai come unto þe place
Þare þe sterne stynt of hys pace
  Þai entred & ware noȝt drade.
Iosep & mary in þai fande
& þe child on hyr kne syttande.
  Þan ware þai blyth & glade.
Þai toke þan oute of *þer* tresore
& knelyd all thre þe child before
  With gude cou*n*tennance & sayd :
Jaspar gayfe hy*m* gold to hys offryng
In taken þat he was *ver*ray kyng,
  Ou*er* all kynges power had ;

Yelchar ensens unto hym offerd
In taken swilke thyng hy*m* proferde
  Þat he was god *ver*ray ;
Baltyȝar offerd hym myr myldly
I*n* taken *þat* he was man & sulde dy
  When gret god dight ys day
Man sawle *þat* was thrall to make it fre.
Þus knew þai hym *with* *þer* offeran*d*es thre
  Kyng, god, & man alway.
Mary thankyd þam *þan* *with* myld chere
& *þer* als þai knelyd all infere
  Þe childes blyssy*n*g had þai.

When þis was don, hamward þai went.
All thre to herode *þan* haue þai ment
  Þer way trewly at take
To telle hym of ih*esus* as þai hym hyght ;
Bot an anngell appered to þa*m* *þat* nyght,
  Bad, slepe-noȝt, syrs, bot wake ;
Wendes noght to herode for nakyns thy*n*g,
Ffor he es fals of hys sayng.
  He haytes ȝow for ih*esus* sake ;

The three kings present their gifts.

An angel warns the three kings against Herod.

Bayth ȝow & hym he thynkes to sla ;
Þerfore anather way hame ȝe ga
To passe fals herodes wrake.

Þai rase & thankyd god with myld mode
& hamward anoþer way þai ȝohde
Als þe anngell pam command.
Þe water of taars when þai were past
Þan were þai glad & heghed þam fast
Ylkon to þer awen land.
Bot efter þam fast enqwerede,
& als sone als he was of þam lered
Þat þai ware passed þat strand,
[fol. 197b] Þe same schype þat þai past ouer yn
And other allso þan did þai byrne,
All þat hys men þer fande.

Ffor wa almost herode wod was
Þat þai so gatte fro hym suld passe.
Herod orders the slaughter of the innocents. He called hys consell hym nere
& ordand all þat land thurgh outte
Within bedleem & þare abowte
All þe childyr of twa ȝere
& yf þai war a half ȝere more,
Lordys or lauedys, what ouer þai wore,
Sla þam all don infere.
Of payne of lyfe & lym he bade :
So sall I best venge me of þat lade
& on no noþer manere.

Bot gret god of hys grace alsone
Þat wote all thynge or yt be done
Herof sett remedy.
An angel warns Joseph to flee with Christ to Egypt. He sent to Iosepe an angell bryght
Als he lay slepand þe same nyght,
Bad hym ryse hastely
& take þe childe & hys modyr hende,
Bad hym faste into Egyp wende
& dwell þer prevely
Unto I wyt þe for to say ;
For herodes sekes þi child alway
To sla hym sikyrly.

Iosep rase up þan sone I wys
& sayd: lorde god, what lyf ys þis?
In what place may I dwell?
I am ald & my banys er sare;
Now bus me wende I wot neuer qwhare
Bot als I hard þe angell tell.
Here wend I haf lyfd with my frendes,
& now herode all togider sheudes;
Curst be he with brek & bell,
Ffor may I myself neuer so yll welde
Yt bus me trauell now in my elede
Ffull fare ouer many a fell.

He cald þan on hys childer two
And hys 3ohng damsell, bad þam go
To trusse & all playn.
Mo þan two oxen had þai no3t;
Hys other hernays full sone was broght
& layd all in a wayn.
Mary with her child on an asse satt
& Iosep another for hymself he gatt
To go, for he was no3t bayn.
When þai had on þis wysse trussed,
Þai went be nyght, for þai ne dursted
Be day for dred be slayn.

So wald þai no3t walke in apert
Bot went ouer mowntayns thurgh desert
Þat no man suld þam knaw.
Fra herodes towns þai gonn þam dresse,
And held ay forth þe wyldernesse;
Bot wyld bestes no3t þai saw.
Herodes men has fast childyr slayn,
Soukand & spayned þay spared ryght nan
Nowther of heigh no lawe;
So þat þai slow in bedlem lande
A Cxl and foure thowsande.
Þis was a sory thrawe.

Off þis ylke nombre þat were inward
Childre of herodes þat war no3t sparde,
Ffor two was slayn ful eueyn;

144,000 children are slain.

[fol. 198a]

Because of ih*esus* toke he þus brake,
& sene þai dyede for god sake
Þer sawles er all in heuen.

Herod commits suicide and is succeeded by Archylaus.

Herode had eftyr sorow jnogh,
Ffor w*ith* hys knyfe hy*m*selfe he slogh;
He hade hy*m* þ*at* none sall neuen.
Effter come hys son archylaus
& regned, þe boke beres wytnes þus;
So sett gret god *þer* steuen.

The hardships of Joseph's flight.

Iosep w*ith* all hys fayre men3he
Wendes furth thurgh þ*at* wyld co*n*tre,
For þai durst no3t abyde,
Na for hete wyst þai no3t what was best;
And plase saw þai nane in to reste
Bot a cafe þer besyde.
Þer toke he down mary so swete
& ih*esus* went furth on hys fette;
Bot out of þ*at* cafe wyde
Come *þer* wylde dragons many one.
Allas, sayd mary, my child bes slone;
Grett god help hy*m* þis tyde.

Ih*esus* 3ode fourht emang þam all,
& to hys fett fast gonn þai ffall
& worshypt hy*m* on *þer* wyse;
Lyons & lebardes com hym aboute,
& þai gon hym lowe and lowte,
No3t stirred till he had ryse.
Iosep & hys thre childre stode
Apon þe wayne full myld of mode
So sare þ*am* gon þai gryse.
Ih*esus* sayd, moder, dred 3ow noght,
& Iosep, of þe bestes haue 3e na thoght;
Þai com for oure seruyse.

Wild beasts honour and obey Christ.

Iosep & hys men3he war þ*an* all blyth
& come doun fra þe wayn ful swyth,
*Þer*to yf þam thoght layth.
All þas wyld bestes for ih*esus* sake
Mad þam desport als þai couth make,
Dragons & lyons bath,

So mykyll þat had *þer* ennemyse bene
Þai ffor þam all appon þat grene
  Þai sulde do þ*am* no skath.
Iosep sayd þan, lorde, blyssed be yow
Þat swylke a child haues sent us now
  Sa*m*wyse us fra all whaht.

Þan was fulfyllyd þe p*ro*phecy
Þ*at* danyell sayde and jeremy
  Of ih*esus* full lange beforne,
How dragons sall do þe honor
& lyons & lybardys for þe socour
  Lowe hym for uther store.
Whe*n* Iosep had rest hym þ*er* a whyle
He sayd, Egyp ys hythen many a myle ;
  I wald fayne we w*er* thore.
Mary on hyr asse agayn he drest ;
Þe lyons & liberds wald *þer* no3t rest
  Bot folowed þ*am* eu*er* more.

Þus went þai furth on *þer* (j)aurneye
Ou*er* hilles & dales fully dayes thre,
  Ffand þai thurogh hegh gate.
Mary sayd þ*an* hyr burd rest efte,
For febyll hyr strengh was hyr ner refte
  Þe weder was þan so hatte.
Under a tre þar owmbre was ;
Iosep toke hyr doun of hir asse
  Þ*at* semely þ*er* under scho sate.
Þe tres was fayre & wonder hegh ;
Mary luked up, þer on scho segh
  Heng many a full fayr date.

Iosep, scho sayd, & grett god wald,
Of 3hone fayre fruyte whyne myght I fald
  Ffor us & oure men3he.
He sayd : leue mary, leue þi dyn ;
Here es no m*an* may þ*er*to wyn
  Þ*at* hys so hegh a tre.
I haue mar toght, als god me saue,
Whar I myght any watter haue
  To drynke our bestes & we.

Prophecy is fulfilled.

[fol. 193*b*]

Mary must rest and eat.

I wald we þeroff had our ffill,
With þi þe dates hang here full styll
All þis seuen ȝher for me.

Ihesus went up & don and playd,
The miracle of the date tree. & how mary & Iosep sayde
He herd & at þam logh.
Moder, he sayd, or ȝe hythin gang
Of ȝhone fruyte yf yt hegher hang
ȝe gett þerof ynogh.
He sayd þe tre, yow make þe boun
& to my moder here bow doun
I bid þe ylke a bogh.
At hys byddyng sone downe yt ȝhode ;
To ete þerof whyls þam thoght gude
Iosep dates to hym drogh

And sayd : now fayre we wele me thynke ;
Bot how þat we sall do of drynke
þerof no red I can.
The miracle of the well. Ihesus bąde þe tre stand up agayne ;
To hys byddyng þe tre was bayne,
Als he was fyrst stod þan.
He bade oute of þe rote spryng
A well with water most plesyng ;
Ffor helpe of woman
þer was a well er Iosep wyst
Cold & gude þat sloken thryst,
To drynke full fast þai ran.

When þai had eten & dronken wele
& ryst þam in þat place sum dele,
Ihesus to þat tre sayd :
The date tree is transported to paradise. Ffor yow has comfort my moder here
With other trees þat me ere dere
þi place hys now preuad
To be in pradysse for euer mare.
With an anngell sone was þare
& a braunche of gon brayd
[fol. 199a] & bare it & sett yt in paradys,
For frue3 þat es of gret prys
þeron sall be dispayed.

When þis was don als I 3ow say
Iosep heghed hym on hys way
  Als fast as he myght truse.
Ihesus on mary kne he satt,
& be þe way Iosep noght forgat.
  He sayd : leue son ihesus,
Þer mountans er so hegh & grett
& þe sone scaldes us nere for hete
  Þat shynes so hatė on us ;
May we noght sauely leve þes douns
& walke here by 3e se gude touns ?
  For owmbre lat us do þus ;

Ffor and we ouer þe montanys merke
Seuen & thrytty lang day werke
  To Egip get we or mare ;
He sayd, 3e shorot (?) þam all ways.
& ihesus byght hym, within thre days,
  Iosep, 3e sall be þar.
He bad Iosep before hym loke,
& Egyp hylles als says þe boke
  Als son before þam ware.
Iosep hurkyld up þan & smylde
& sayd, þis es a blyssed chylde,
  Mary, þat þu us bare.

Be þat tyme drew yt nere to nyght,
Bot tyll a cyte þai com full ryght
  Þe boke says hat sotryne.
A lytell fra egyp þat cete was,
Bot ferrer þan þat nyght wald þai noght passe,
  Þai had na gude wyll thyne ;
So þai wer kynde þer with no man.
Att þe last to a wydow hows þai wan
  Whore herber was gude & fyne ;
& þat nyght þer þai toke þer reste.
Þai were refresshed wele of þe beste
  Boyth with gude met & wyne.

Up in chamber þis men3he lay ;
Þer bestes stud under þam & ete hay ;
  Bot word went of þam tyte

Jesus shortens the journey to Egypt.

They take lodging for the night.

A child visiting Jesus is pushed downstairs and killed.

Þat many of þe chldyr of þat cete
Come on þe morne ihesus for to se
He was so fayre & whyte.
& als þai þe stayre up wente
Ane of þam another hente
Þat mast was leef to flyte
& to þe erth doun hym keste
Þat hys nekbon þer all to breste.
Y[lk]one gon other wyte.

Ane after another þan hame þai ȝohode
To þe childe frendes howse. þai wer wode,
Sayd þer child ded suld be.
Þai askyd þam how & in qwhat stede
Þat þar childe suld þan be dede.
Þe childer bad cum & se.

Jesus is accused of the child's death.

ȝyll spyrde þam als who dyd þat thyng;
Þe childer sayd, syrs, a ȝong fundelyng
New come to þis cete.

[fol. 199b]

When þai fande als þe childre sayde,
Up unto þe chambre gon þai brade,
Sayd þai suld dye all thre.

Of þe wyset of þam þan spake one
& sayd, ȝowr child our child has slone;
Þerfore ȝe sall here dye.
Ihesus stude still before þam all
& answerde no word gret ne small,
Þerof was gret ferly.
Ioseþ & mary bathe togedere
Sayd, soun, we er com hydere
To dwell þu wote wole qwy;
Fforþi son help us in þis nede
Sen we er all clene of þis dede,
White us here oppenly.

Ihesus before þaim answerd þan
& bad: go we furth ilke man,
Speke with hym þat ded lys.
Þe men had wonder all of þat tale,
& þider þai folowed hym out all hale.
Ihesus bad þe child up rysse.

He sayd: þu, ȝeon be þi name,
Es I oght of þi ded to blame
  Er kest þe don on þis wysse?
Speke oppynly here before all men
So þat þai þe soythe wele kone
  Þat þai me noȝt dyspysse.

Þe sat up and spake gude spede.
He sayd, lorde, ȝe wate noȝt of þis dede
  Ne none of ȝhurs thoghght.
He lay doun dede as he dyde are.
So, syrs, saide ihesus, what wyll ȝe mare?
  Þis wekednes neuer I wroght.
Now tell us, child, þan who yt dyd,
Ffor certys hys dede sall noȝt be hyd.
  Ihesus said he wald noȝt.
Yt suffys ynogh to þam & me
Þat we þerof noght gylty be
  Ne hym to hys ded broght.

Þer men stode all þan als þai ward made;
Answer to ihesus none þai hade,
  Bot þai made dowl full faste.
Mary sayd þen unto ihesus:
Son, sen þis child com hider for us
  To se þe was his caste;
Allowe hym þerfore for hys gud wyll
& lat hym noȝt þus ded lyg styll;
  He makes hys frend agaste.
Now moder, he sayde, at þi byddyng
Ffull bleythly þan will I do þis thyng;
  Hys lyfe sall langer laste.

Ihesus before þam in þat stede
Sayd, ryse up, ȝeon, & be noȝt ded,
  Ffor þu sall lyfe agayne.
At hys biddyng þe child up rase.
Hys frendys þat wer befor his fase
  Wer þan all ġlad & fayne
& dyd hym worshyp & gret honour,
& sayd, þis hys oure saweour
  Sall save þis world al playne.

Jesus proves himself innocent.

Jesus restores the child to life.

[fol. 200*a*]

Thurgh oute þat cete þis worde son wente,
& ȝeon frendes grett presandes sent
To þam was noȝt to layn.

Þus þai visite þam dayes sere
And did þam dwell *þer* all *þat* ȝere
With ioy & myrth enogh.
Be þan ih*esus* was thre ȝere ald ;
He wex full fast both wyse & bolde
& fayr of hyd & hew.
Þat cete of sotryne was lang & wyde,
& þe tempyll of Egyp stud be a syde
Full of *þer* godes untrew.
Mary & ih*esus* soyth to say
Went þam þider apon a day ;
Few folke hys power knew,

The false gods fall before Jesus.

Bot wh*en* þai com w*ith*in þat place
All þas fals godys be þar face
Ffell doun & myght noȝt stand.
Þe dowke of þat cyte, affredoseus,
Hard som tell þat yt was þus.
Þe best knyghtes of ys land
He toke w*ith* hy*m* & som þider went.
Þe p*re*stes of þe tempyll wande haf ben hent
Þer godes for he so fand
All had gret wondyr how yt myght be.
He lokyd beseyde & mary gon se
With hyr son *in* hir hand.

Þe duke trowed *þer* gods þa*n* war fendes.
He sayd to all hys knyghtes & frendes :
Bot þis child gods son ware
He had noght rasyd ȝeon *þat* was dede
& sithen gart our godes *in* þis stede
Ffall don for all *þer* ffare.
ȝe se wele he garte þam bow ;
*Þer*fore I rede we on hym trow
& leue *þer* fendes eu*er* mare
Þat we noght wregh ne falles noȝt jn
Als dyd kyng pharro for hys syn,
Ffor *þat* wald smart us sare.

How he pursued ȝe hard well tell
Moyses and þe folke of ysraell
  To þai com to þe see.
Yt stode on ayther syde us as a wall
On to þe tyme þai war past all,
  Sythen dround hys men & he.
Þai sayde þe dukes consell was gude,
& loved all gode *with* hert and mode
  Thurgh oute *þat* gret cete
Þat had þam swylke a *pro*phet sente
Oute of ysraell þam to tente
  Ffro fendes & make *þam* fre.

Þe lordes & all men *þat* þar was
Prayd mary & ih*esus* þai suld noȝt passe
  Bot dwell here wils ȝe wyll.
In *þat* cete had þai gret werchype,
And thurgh oute all þe land of Egype
  Þer durst nane do þam yll.
Bot so befell yt *with*outen dowte
Ih*esus* for to play hym he went oute ;
  Hys mod*er* at home was styll,
And fyue ȝher old he was *þat* tyde.
He went to þe see syde
  & childe*r* come many hym tyll.

And as þai playd þam on þe sand
Ilke child made hy*m* *with* hys hand
  A podell *with* wate*r* *þer*in
& *with* closed it wonder wele
So þat þe wate*r* neue*r* a dele
  Suld *þer*out passe ne ryn.
A prest son of egypt tempyll *þer* ore
Whar ih*esus* cast doun *þe* goddes befor
  To hys podell fast gon wende,
And spitously he brake ih*esus* game.
Þe childre hys felows sayd þan same
  *Þer*of *þat* he dyd syn.

Ih*esus* sayd, se *with*oute gylt
How þis child my game has spilte.
  To hy*m* *þan* sayd he mare :

The city is converted.

1708 1712 1716 1720 1724 1728 1732 1736 1740

[fol. 200*b*]

Jesus goes out to play.

A priest's son disturbs Jesus' play and is killed.

Þu deuel son, seed of wykkednes,
Wi*th*outen grace and all gudness,
Þi brau*n*ches er baran & bare;
Þe rowtes of þe er old, cold, & dry.
At þat word fell he sudanly
Benomen ryght als he ware.
Ih*esus* all lyggand þ*er* hym lefte
& to þ*er* game agayne ȝode efte,
Ffor hym wald þai noght spare.

Ih*esus* toke clay, w*ith* wat*er* yt weted,
Sythen byrdes þ*er* of he countyrfeted
Ffull p*ro*purly to þer paye.
A yew come forby & saw wele how
& sayde: child, þu suld noȝt wyrke now;
Yt ys our sabot day;
Þ*er*fore þu sall by for þis dede
Unto þi frendes I sall þe lede.
Toke hy*m* be þe hand alwaye;
Hame to Iospe sone he hy*m* broght
& sayd, se what ȝowr child has wroght
Exp*re*yse agayn our laye.

Jesus causes clay birds to fly.

Iosep on hys heued þan ih*esus* smate;
He sayde, þu sulde be w*ith* us algate,
Ffra wanton childer draw.
Ih*esus* sayd þan, sen I am blamed
Ffor clay & ȝe þam byrdes has named,
Fle furth sparows on raw.
At þat worde sone þai toke þ*er* fleyght.
Þe jew was wonderd þan of þat syght;
Ffor shame couth no man knaw
Es here þe same thyng þ*at* he made;
Chasty hym þ*at* he bowred noȝt so brad
To wyrke agayne our law,

Bot wente & tolde hys frendes alsone
How ih*esus* þ*at* yhong child had done,
Þ*an* had þai gret mervayle.
Be þan þe p*re*ste hys son has myst;
Þe childre þat of þat doyng wyst
Told hy*m* fra top to tayle.

Hys frendes assembled þan togyder; [fol. 201a]
To Iosep hows þai went all thyder
& sayd: gud man, all hayle,
3our childe þat standes before us here
On better maner bus 3ow hym lere
Elles all 3our frendshyp wil fayle.

He cursed oure child apon þe sande
& þer lefte hym dede lyggande;
Þis was a wykyd dede.
Teche hym no3t to curse childer so,
Ffor to blysse þam sulde he tytter to;
Þat wer wele gretter nede.
Fforþi bot 3e þis mys amende
To dwell here with hym we 3ow defende,
Bot fast 3e hyther hym lede.

Joseph complains to Mary of Jesus' conduct.

Iosep blamed ihesus þar oppynly;
Sythen went he forth unto mary,
Bad hir scho suld take hede

Ihesus, hyr 3ong son, better to tent
Elles wyll he gar us all be shent
& into pryson be tane.
Þe folke er in poynt agayne us ryse,
For a child þat ded yonder lyse
Þan make þai all þis mane.
Byd hym swylke maners þat he leue
Or elles hys lyfe þai will hym reue;
Þan war our ioy all gane.
Mary sayd to hym þan with wordes myld,
Swete son, what trespast yhone childe
On þe sand þat he ligs slane?

At Mary's request, Jesus restores the dead child.

Moder, he sayd, he ys worthy
Hys dede, for he brake spitously
Þe handwarke þat I wroght.
Ma son, scho sayd, I wald full fayne
Þat þe child war on lyfe agayne,
To ded elles þe we broght;
Þat gettes us ennemys & we er demed
Out of þis land ilkane be flemede,
Ffor shame þat wold I noght.

Ihesus wald noȝt hys modyr wreght
Bot sayd, to gett hys frendship blyth
Hys socour sall son be soght.

Unto þe dede childe þan ihesus ȝode.
Hys frendes ylkone about hym stode
With hevy herttes & noȝt lyght;
& ihesus put hym un þe bake
& with hys fote þis word he spake:
Ryse up, þu woryde wyght,
Ffor yow arte noght worthy I wys
At come unto my faydyr blysse
Whar yoi and ryste ys dyght.
Þe child rase up þan verrament
& hayme with hys (f)rendys þus he went;
Þai war glad of þat syght.

A child who strikes Jesus falls dead.

Has ihesus wente home þan be þe stret
Another jew child þat gon he met,
& on hys brest he hym smate
Sythen ran away when he had don.
Ihesus unto þat child sayd full son:
Stand, sone, stynt of þi grate;
[fol. 201b] Þou smate me & I noȝt trespaste.
Þus pleynde he hym & toke witnes fast
Þat raysed no debate.
Þe child at þat worde ded fell doun;
Ilke man gon þai to other rowun—
Ihesus is of gret state.

Þe frendes of þat ded child þan aghte;
To Iosep & mary fast þai raghte
& þis challenge þam kest:
Ihesus, ȝowr sone so wode and wylde,
Ryght now has he slayne our child,
Bad þam loke what war beste;
The people complain to Joseph. Ffor certys hys dedys us mykell deres.
Iosep toke þan ihesus be þe eres,
Sayd, þu kan haf no ryste;
Lo what þai wittnesse all on raw.
Ilk man sayd wele war þam þai saw
For þai wold haf yt dreste.

3yt askyd þai more whare þai hym had
And sayd: for soth we er all drade
  3owr hawn child he no3t esse,
Ffor he werkes wounders on many wyse
& in þis cete makes grett maystryse
  Hys werkes bers witnesse.
Mary answerde unto þam þer:
God wote wele þat I hym bar;
  Als oures we sall hym drysse.
& ihesus sayd, bot my fader wyll ware,
Swylke werkes ne wroght I neuer mare.
  Here of wondred mare & lesse

& sayd: for fader, moder, & brother
Herdely yow sall do another
  Or here þu sall no3t dwell,
Ffor þou dos thyng was never arevsed.
Als many as ihesus þar acused
  To be blynd þam befell.
Mary sayd, ihesus, son, lat swilke be.
& he sayd, moder, soyth þai se
  Þer alken dampnacoun of hell.
Þan made þa(m) dole & wer sary,
Bot ihesus at prayer of myld mary
  Heled þam all soth to tell.

& þat same day als says þe boke
Ihesus hys way unto þe feld toke
  & saw a flat of whete.
Off þas fayre eres he gederd some;
Sythen hame agayne fast did he come.
  Þe glene was no3t full gret
Bot sone he hong yt ouer þe fyre
& Iosep childre in þer atyyre
  Þerof some gart he ette.
Iosep sayd þan, þis is gret skorne;
Can þu no3t knaw other mens corne?
  Þerfore wald ihesus be bette.

Ihesus sayd, Iosep, wryth 3ow noght.
Þe flate þat I þe corn fra broght
  Ffra now furth sall do þis:

Jesus' accusers become blind, but he heals them at Mary's request.

The miracle of the grains of wheat.

Als many whete cornes als here er,
Als many bussheles þan sall yt ber
Ylke ȝere & neu*er* on mys.
[fol. 202*a*] Þa lorde þ*at* aw it þ*an* sall have þat;
Þis grace þan grant I unto þ*at* flat
Eu*er* more to bere I wys.
Josep sayd: ih*esus*, blessed be yow;
Fforgyfe me þ*at* I haue t*res*past now,
Þ*er*to, son, lat us kys.

Þus þai dwelled i*n* egype lande
In þe cyte of Sotryne, I und*er*stand.
At a blist an*n*gel byddyng
Þe tempyll w*ith* þ*er* fals godys bydene
Ih*esus* gart fall & made all clene,
To god tu*rn*ed old & ȝhyng.
An angel directs Joseph to return home. & so yt befell apon a nyght
To Iosep appered an an*n*gell bryght.
He sayd: wake of þi slepyng;
Wake þi child & mary alsa
& wende agayne to þe land of Iuda
& make þ*er* ȝow*r* dwellyng,

Ffor þai er ded now euer ylkane
Þ*at* wold þe child & ȝow haue slane;
Þ*er*fore hau(e) ȝow no drede.
Sone on þe morne when yt was day
Iosep drest hym to wende hys way,
Toke leve at all þ*at* lede.
He trust togyder swylke als he hade
& sayd, þus was neu*er* old m*an* bestade
Þ*at* þ*er*of had na nede.
He sett mary & hyr sone on an asse
& toke ane for hy*m*selfe ordand wasse,
Went all furthe, gode þ*am* spede.

Wh*en* þai were in þe hegh way sett,
Iosep spyrde of ylk m*an* þ*at* he mett
He goes to Nazareth. Thythandes of þ*at* contre;
& many told hym wele enogh
How þat kyng herod hy*m*selfe slogh.
He askyd qwho kyng suld be.

Þai sayde all, archilaus, hys sone ;
& Iosep dred hym nere þerto wone ;
To naȝareth forþi went he ;
Þer had he frendes & herytage :
By þan was ihesus sex ȝer age ;
All war glade hym to see.

& mykyll of þat folke þat Iosep knew
Mad þam myrthes ouer ylke day new,
Bot most for ihesus sake ;
Ffor þai wald of hys mervayls here
& also of hys gude techyng lere,
Ensample of hym take.
Bot when he hard þat ryst and pes
Was in bedleem withowtyn lesses,
Iosep gan hym redy make
& þitherwarde went, þe sothe to tell.
Bot in þe way þis chaunce hym befell :
By a wade in a slake

Outlawes & thefes welke in þat lande.
Þis custom had þai all ordan(d)e
For stryfe amang þam þer,
What day robe þat þai went oute
Ylk man suld haue hys day aboute
Þe pray qwhat euer yt war ;
On other wyse wald þai noȝt skyfte.
He þat fell þat day hys hede up lyft,
About hym fayst gon stare.
He saw Iosep and mary come.
Ffelawes, he sayde, ȝe sall non nome,
Þis hys myn war it mare.

He sayd, stand, stand, for ȝe sall noȝt passe.
Man & best, all þat þare was,
Tyll hys home he it led.
Hys dwellyng was be þat same wodside
Þare thoght he þam all þat tyde
Iosep was neuer so drede.
Þe thefs wyffe scho toke þam in
& sayde, leue, syr, yt were gret syn
To leve þer folke unclad.

Captured by an outlaw en route to Bethlehem.

[fol. 202*b*]

I rede on no wysse þat ȝe þam spoyle
Ffor drede ȝe fall in fowler dowle ;
  Þus allway scho hym rade.

Þe thef hade a childe ȝhong
Was blynde & also had no tong,
  No fote apon to gan.
A bath of erbes was made for yt ;
Mary prayed hyr sone þerin myght sit
  A qwhyle fyrst, noȝt full lang.
Þe thef wyfe when scho ihesus se
Scho sayd to mary it so suld be
  Ffor soyth elles did scho wrang.
Whyls ihesus in þat bath was done,
A fayre bed made scho hym sone
  In a byrn þam emang.

The outlaw's child is healed.

When he was bathed he was wele payde ;
In a fayre bede þai hym layde
  To ryst þat frely fode.
Þe thyfe wyfe withouten lette
Hyr lamed chyld in þat bath scho sett
  Whyls hyr toght gude,
& sone to hys modyr spake
Out of þat bathe scho suld hym take.
  On two fette þan he stode
& loked on hyr with eyn full bryght ;
Scho was full glade of þat syght.
  To tell þe thef scho ȝode

And sayd : syr, trow to my tale ;
Our lamed childe es now hale
  Ffro hys hede to hys hele.
Cum se, for here in we haue
Hym þat þis world fro syn sall saue,
  Ihesus, þis wote I wele.
Þai went to þe bed þar ihesus lay
& seys hym swet þen alway.
  He sayd, se what I fele ;
Þe swettest salbour þat euer feld man
All þat fro ihesus face come þan
  Þai keped yt ilke a dele

And in a syluer boyst þai yt dyd.
Whe*n* ih*esus* wakynde yt þus betyd;
  Þai askyd hy*m* boyth m*er*cy.
He fforgayfe þaim, þan war þai glade.
Ffull sone þai sold all *þat* þai hade
  & folowed furth i*n*fere.
So went þai w*ith* ih*esus* fro home
Unto tyll þai to a cyte come
  Was in þe land of Jury.
Of ih*esus* comyng *þer* godes wyst faste;
Þai fell doun & þe tempyll braste,
  *Þer*fore war Iewes drerry.

In þat cete was þa*n* hunger grette
& also mekyll defawte of mette,
  Ffor corne was *þer* so der
So þat þe gudma*n* and hys wyfe
Had no thyng wher w*ith* to lede *þer* lyfe,
  Þer gud was gone so ner.
Bot *þat* bouste w*ith* þat swete so gude
When ih*esus* slepyd *þat* fro hys face ȝode
  In hys hous when þai were
& þat a gentyll woma*n* boght
To pop hyr w*ith*, for scho thoght
  To make hyr face swet & clere;

Thre hundreth penys scho gayf *þer*for,
& yt was worth full mykell more;
  Bot *þat* ne west þai.
Þis woma*n* leyfe in lechery,
Ffor scho ne warned no ma*n* hir body
  To take me*n* outher nyght or day.
Þus scho did to þat intent,
Scho hard wele tell & word wyde went
  Ih*esus*, godys son allway,
He suld be borne of a woman.
Bot who suld be hys fadyr þan
  Þat couth no man say.

Þat woma*n* fayne wald scho haue bene,
Bot on a thowsand fald so clene
  Of god was ordan & dyght.

The box of precious ointment.

[fol. 203*a*]

The ointment is sold to a harlot.

The ointment converts the harlot—Mary Magdalene.

To þat entent hyr syn scho wroght
Yf all yt served hyr of noght,
Bot efter yt helpyd hyr ryght.
Ffor efter scho had ones enoynt hyr face
With þat oynment þat so precyus was,
Scho was neuer alf so bryght;
& swylk a grace broght hir within
Scho had neuer efter wyll to do syn,
Þat swette had swylke a myght.

Þis woman name was mary magdelen;
Of hyr boust was scho full farynen,
To hyr þat was full swette;
& of hyr dedes þat scho had done
Scho went & of þam shrayfe hir sone,
Ffor hir syns sore scho grett.
With þat oyntment so precyus
Scho come to symond leprous huse,
Þer with oynt ihesus fett
& of hir synnes askyd scho hym mercy.
He forgayf hyr þar appynly,
Þe story bers wytnes þer.

Þus dwell þai in þat cete þar;
Sythen unto bedleem gon þai fare
With þar frendes ffor ever mare.
[fol. 203b] Iosepe had þore boyth kyn & kyth,
Ffor he was of þe hous of dauide
& als of hys menȝe.
Be þan was ihesus ȝeres seuen.
Þe prestes of þe tempel com soth to neuen
& outher frendes hym to se.
Þai conseld mary & Iosep also
Þat ihesus suld unto þe skole go.
Blythly, sayd þai, wyll we,
& ȝhede to þe scole with hym infere.

Jesus is sent to school and slays his master.

Hys maister come þat suld hym lere
And .a. b. c. for hym he wrate
& toke it to ihesus & bad hym say a.
Ihesus sayd, tell maister or þu ga
Ffyrst what es .b. algate,

And I sall tell what a. es þan.
Þe mast*er* was a dispitous man ;
  Ihe*sus* fortene he smate ;
& ded smate hy*m* & slow hy*m* sone.
Ihe*sus* rase up whe*n* þat was done
  & ȝede hame by þe gate.

When Iospe hard þis he was yll payd
& to mary sone he sayd :
  Þi. child I will ga fra hy*m*.
He dos so many a wykkid dede
Some hasty ma*n* forþi I drede
  Þe*r*fore su*m* tym sal sla hy*m*.
Mary sayd : Iosep, dred ȝow noȝt ;
He þat hym heder sent and broght
  On na wyse wyll forga hy*m*,
& he wyll kepe hy*m* boyth day & nyght
Þat na ma*n* gettes of hy*m* swylke myght.
  To hys kepyng I be tak hy*m*.

Joseph again complains of Jesus.

Þe word hereof þa*n* went full wyde
Bot so another mayste*r* was þer besyde,
  & ȝache was his name.
He spake to hy*m* & was yuel payde.
Why gare ȝe noȝth lere ȝow child, he sayd,
  Me thynke ȝe er to blam.
He begyns fast to manstate at draw ;
Ffor þi lat lere hym of moyses law
  & o þe*r* letture for sham.
And Iosep sayd : who ca*n* hy*m* lere ?
I knaw no man now þe*r* fer no nere
  Can wysse hy*m* wele fra ham.

Jesus has a new teacher.

ȝache sayde : ȝys, als god me saue,
Wyth o þe*r* dyssiples þat I have
  Ffull wele can I hy*m* teche.
Ihe*sus* hard hys saw wele & fyne
& sayd : þou can of worldes doctr*i*ne ;
  I now bath proue & p*re*che,
& in yhour haues þu als connyng
Þat I before þe law haues knawyng
  & further ȝit ca*n* I reche ;

Jesus astonishes all with his wisdom.

Ffor of ȝow wayte when ȝe wer borne
& I wote wele & lang beforne.
All mervayles þan of his speche
[fol. 204a] & sayde, swylke wordes herd we neuer ȝyt
Of philopher ne of prophette
Als he shewes sad & sere.
Þus sayd þai all & of þam demes
Þe child es elder far þan hym semes ;
He spekes of many ȝere,
Ffor he menes of Noye fflode.
All men þat þer abut hym stode
War þan in full gret were,
& ȝache sayd : Iosep, I am adrade,
Ffor ane disciple wend I here haue had
Now hafe I mayster here.

Who gat hym or bare hym or gaf hym at sowke ?
Ffor so bald wordes in no mans bowke
Was neuer in Israell.
He ys grett als god for all our dyn,
Or elles an anngell spekes hym withyn ;
I can no noþer tell.
Ihesus sayd to þam bath alde & ȝhyng :
Ȝe mervayle for I am so ȝong a thyng
& spekes wordes ȝow thynghke ful fell.
I say ȝow þat I wote certanly
When ȝe wer born & qwhen sall dy
& whore ȝe sall ay dwell ;

& here of yf ȝow thynke mervayle,
I say ȝow þis & sall noght fayle
A mervayle two so sare ;
When I fro þe erth ys lyft on lofte
Þe oyngtyng of ȝowr kyng al softe
Sall fayle als neuer war.
Þus met he als þe prophtee says
When þai hym on þe crosse sall rayse
Þe fioles þat þai had þer
With ountment to oynt kyng withall
Suld be all voide both gret and small
& sees foreuer mare.

Þe Iewys & pharaseus when þai þis harde
Als þai war mad men all þai farde
& sayd, qwhat deuel ys þis?
Yt semes als þis ȝong child war wode,
Or elles he can ouer mekell gude
Euen lyk a god of blys.
Bot Iosep had þer besyde a frende,
Another maister curtas & hende
& mek withouten mys.
He sayd to Iosep and mary mylde,
Qwy wyll ȝe noght take me ȝour child,
Blythely will I hym wys

Tyll tym he grewe & ebrew couth
& als speke latyn with hys mowth
& ȝyt oþer seyens mo.
Sen he es of so fayre stature,
Þe folke of Israell wald hym honoure
Ffor hys comyng to an fro.
Mary & Iosep boyth þan togyder
Assent wele ihesus suld go þider.
To þe maister hus went þai two,
And has he gon þer aboute loke
Ihesus was war sonne of a boke;
To yt fast gon he go

& opend it sone with hys hande.
Als tytte before hym wreten he fand
Þe gret poynt of þe lawe;
& prophetes of þe halygaste.
He undid þam lest & maste
As he red þam on rawe.
All þe dyssiples þat war þeryn
Whils ihesus red mad þai na dyn,
To here fast þai draw.
Þe maister prayd hym to rede more forþi,
And ihesus rede so gracyuosly
Þai stood of hym gret awe.

To Iosep hous went he belyve
& sayd: þu gude man & þu gude wyfe,
Tak home ȝowr child agayne.

Joseph's friend undertakes to teach Jesus.

[fol. 204b]

Jesus explains the law and the prophets to his teacher.

He ys þe wysest of all place,
Ffor he ys full of gods grace
*Þer*of may ȝe be fayne;
& of god has he all þis wytt.
Ihesus sayd: full sogth ys ytt;
My wysdom, myght, & mayne
All togyder verrament
Of my fader hyder sent
Ffor soth es noȝt to layne.

Jesus restores the dead teacher.

& for þi gude worde & þi dede
Yf I þerto haf litell nede
Sych harte I thar to lak.
My fyrst maist*er* þat me so smate
Sall ryse fro ded to lyfe algate;
Þis do I for þi sake.
Byfor þai all þ*er* in þat stede
Þe maist*er* fechid þat was dede
Hys sorow & syte to slak.
Of his lyfe was he glade & blyth
& thankyd ih*esus* full fele syth,
Gret louyng of hy*m* gon make.

Whe*n* þis was don als I ȝow say,
Ih*esus* went out into þe way.
Before hym þ*er* se he stand
A child þ*at* hewes wod in þe strete,
& w*ith* hys ax had he hurt his fette;
He stod full fast bled*and*,
Ffor all þe taas of hys ryght fote
War euen of & help no bote
Of no ma*n* nowre he fand.

Jesus heals a wounded child.

Ih*esus* toke up þan all hys taas
& to þe hurt child furth he gas
& blyssed ys hurt w*ith* hys hand.

W*ith*outen wemb was he þa*n* all halle.
Ihesus sayd: gyf yow neu*er* taylle
Bo(t) go agayn to þi werke
& thynk on me here eft*er*warde.
Þe Iewes þat þis thyng saw & harde
Bad ilkan other herke

& sayd, se qwhat þis child dos here. [fol. 205*a*]
Sum sayd he was cryst, god son dere,
  Þat myght swylk maistris werke;
& sum sayde, he sall noȝt come ȝytt;
When Moyses comes, all men sall wytt;
  Hes dedes bes noȝt so derke.

Sone on anoþer day yt befell
Mary sent hyr mayden to þe well
  To fech water clere.
Ihesus herd wele hys moder speke
& wyst wele þat scho hyr pot suld brake,
  Forþi folowed he hyr nere.
Bot als scho ȝede þe folke emang
Þe mayden hyr pot brake in þe thrang.
  Scho went hame with yll chere
& talde mary all hyr unhape.
Ihesus broght wayter ham in hys lape;
  He said: moder, haue water here,

& bad þe damysel þat scho suld fett
All þe skarthes of þe broken pott,
  & scho did so belyve.
Ihesus made it hale son on ane
Þat sygne of brekyng couth þer se nane,
  Nowther man ne wyfe.
Mary kyst hyr swete son þan
& sayd: blyssed be þu þat so gate can
  Kepe us fro sorow & stryfe,
& blyssed be god withouten ende
Þat swylke a gracyus child wald me send;
  Swete son, wele mote þu thryfe.

In bedleem ȝyt befell yt so
A gud man suld to hys gardyng go,
  Iames alfey so he hyght,
Wortes & herbes to take þer yn.
Als he to shere þam suld begyn
  A nedder of hym had syght
& tanged hym yll on hys ryght hand.
He sayd, allas, full lowde cryand.
  Þan hard ihesus þat swete wyght

The miracle of the water pitcher.

& to Iames belyve he ȝede.
He sayd, bot I haue help gud sped
My hand bes lost þis nyght.

Jesus heals the adder's bite.

Ihesus bad hym in trowth be trew
& þan apon hys hand he blew;
Yt was all hale þus sone.
Þe nedder þat tanged him in þat sted
For hys trespas als tyte was ded
þat he to Iames had done.
All Iames frendes þat saw þis thyng
Had gret wonder of þat doyng
When þai saw þer so sone
Þe nedder thus dede withoutyn strake
& sayd, no man may swylke maistris make
Bot gret god son in trone.

Also befell yt in þat same ton
Þer was a wryght bar gret renown
Of a full gude werkman.
A maister thakker of þe hus þat same tyde
Was hys neghbur nere besyde.
Unto hym spak he þan
[fol. 205b] Ffor to make hym a sotyll warke.
Þe wryght alsone had takyn hys m[a]rke
On hys note fast began;
When he hys werke togeder suld sett
Ane tre was shorter þan þe fyrst mete.
Þan gunne he curse and band
& sayd, allas, þis werke ys loste;

Jesus lengthens a beam for a workman.

Now bred me paye all þat yt coste,
þat I may do full yll.
Ihesus come walkand hym allone
& harde þis wryght makand ys mone;
He sayd: gud man, be styll;
Wylke ys þat short tre my lefe brother?
Take þe ton ende, gyfe me þe tother,
& draw with gud wyll.
Ihesus hys ende a fote oyt drewe
& sayd, now es yt long enewe;
Go lay þi merke þer tyll.

At ihesus byddyng þat tre he drest,
Þan was hys worke wele of þe best.
Þerof full fayne was he
& sayd, swylk connyng myght neuer man con
Uther þan cryst, gods awen dere sone.
So sayd all þat yt se
& loved hym forþi bothe nyght & day.
Ihesus went aftyrward out to play
With childer gret plente.
Unto a fayre medow þai 3od full ryght
Whane þe sone shane hayte & bryght;
Þer thoght þam best to be.

Jesus sits on a sunbeam.

Ihesus hys wyld turnes no3t forgate;
He lepe up & on þe son beme he sate
Oppenly befor þam all.
Þai sayd, do we als he haues done,
& styrt up, bot þe sone fayled þam son;
Forþi ded don þai fall.
Some brake hys shulder & som hys arme
& sum hys leg, sum had more harme,
& sum ys neke in sonder small.
Ihesus sat styll, no3t styr hym lyst.
Gude men when þai þer childer myst
Come þider hame þam to call.

When þai ihesus saw on þe sone so sytt,
Þai went ner hand out of þer wytt
Ffor dole of þer childer ded
& sayd, lowde cryand on hym ylkane,
Oure childer has þu shent and slane
Ffor þai trowed at þi rede.
Ihesus sayd: gud men, speke no3t so gret;
Þai wald my dedes allway conterfett;
Þat wroght þam all þis qwed.
Ffor 3e suld not my moder blame
He bad, ryse up childer & gos hame;
Lys no langer in þis sted.

At ihesus byddyng þai ros up þan;
All hale with þer frendes hame þai ran;
Þai thankyd god specially.

[fol. 206a]

Ffro tyme þat Iosep herd þerof telle
Joseph returns to Nazareth.
Lenger þer wald he noght dwelle
Bot dryst hym thyn hastely.
He dyrssed togeder all þat þai had;
Ffor he was feble, hys childer he bad
Tent ihesus wele & mary.
So went þai furth ouer hyll & heth
Tyll þai come agayne to nazareth;
Þer hoped Iosep best to be.

When þai to nazareth come war
He admonishes Jesus.
Iosep byfore myld mare þar
To Ihesus þus he sayde:
3ow erte xij 3ere ald, god wayte,
& drawes full fast to mans state,
Tyme war þi playes wer layd;
Fforþi do now no wanton dede
& put me on myne eld in drede
& make þi moder yll payd.
Ihesus sayd þan Iosep unto,
I wote my selfe best what I sall do.
He went oute þan & playd.

& fore he had bene þar fore
Þe schilder obayte hym mykkyll mor
To be in hys company.
All þat euer of hys comyng hard
Fast þai drew unto hym ward
& welcomd hym þer forþi.
When þai were semblyd a wele gret rowt
Þai went þe cete þan wythowte
Tyll a grene fayr & dry,
& þer som at bares þai ran
& som to lepe also began
Who myght get þer þe maistry.

Jesus again leaps on a sunbeam.
Bot ihesus alson tuckyd up hys skyrt
& one þe sonnes beme up he styrte
& lepe furth a gret lepe.
He sayd, lepe now hereto for shame.
Þe childer hys felows wend do þe same:
Bot þai myst ate fyrst stepe,

Ffor þai fell doun & *þer* lymes brake,
Sum leg, sum arme, sum schuder, sum bake
  Þerto so fast þai threp.
So harmles myght na child thyn go;
& als one brake hys neke in two
  Was mast schrew of *þat* hepe.

Þis ylke shrewed child þan hyght Iudas,
Symon skarate son he was,
  A rych man & a Iew.
He & odyr gudmen of þat ton
To Iosep hous son mad þam bon
  At mak plant of ihesu.
Þai sayd, ȝowr son þe cheldyr ha shent;
Chasty hym & better als ȝe hym tent
  Or sare yt sall ȝow rew.
Iosep lay þer all at male esse,
Sayd mary suld þat mys amese
  & mend þat þai all knew.

Ihesus wyst wele þat þai were gon
Ffor to make playnt on hym ylkon;
  Ffor þi whils þai þer stude
He made þer childer all hale up ryse,
Saue anely Iudas ded styll lyse,
  & with þam home he ȝhode.
Bot when þat mary saw ihesus come,
Lo, scho sayd, ȝhonder er childer some
  All hale of bane & blude.
What þai suld say þan noȝt þai wyst;
Bot when þat þai þe ded child myst,
  His fader was nerhand wode

& ȝayd to mary & ihesus infere,
Whare es my son? He es noȝt here.
  Sum sayd styll he lay.
Mary for hys lyfe þan ihesus prayde:
A wyst ȝe, moder, to hyr he sayde,
  What he salł do som day
Unto ȝour selfe & sythen to me,
Ouer all þis wrold lady to be,
  ȝe wald noȝt for hym pray;

Judas, among others, is killed trying to imitate Jesus.

[fol. 206b]

& better to hym ware to lyfe noȝt;
Ffor ih*esus* of hys doyng *þer* thoght
How he suld hy*m* betray.

Jesus restores Judas to life.

Bot now at ȝo*wr* byddyng he sall noȝt dy,
Ffor hym bus fulfyll þe *pro*phecy
*Þat pro*phetys of me has talde.
He bad hys frendes go *þan* to þe stret,
On lyf agayne sall ȝe hym mete;
Þan had þai joy manyfalde.
Emang þam was *þer* a Iew wysest
Had a child þat luyfed ih*esus* best,
Ffor he was wyse & balde.
Þai dred so sare hys company
In pryson þai put þar child forþi
& set hym *in* a stranghalde.

So when þe Iew had þusgate done
On a day ih*esus* went þider sone
Þe child & þe hus to se;
& ih*esus* sayd, child, what dos þu þar?
He sayd, for I lufyde ih*esus* co*m*pany mar
Þan childe*r* of þis cete.
Ih*esus* bad *þat* þe child luke oute;
He sayd he myght not w*ith*outen dout.
Þan, bad he, put þi fynge*r* to me.

Jesus frees an imprisoned child.

Þer was bot a hole als says þe boke
& by þe fynger out þe child he toke,
Þus harmles yhen paste he.

When hys frendes hard *þat* yt was so
& saw þar child w*ith* ih*esus* (?) go
Þai sayd & were agaste:
Bot we our child ys lyfe refe
Ih*esus* company will he noȝt lefe
Swylke lufe þai to hy*m* cast.

[fol. 207*a*]

Som of þam bad þam lat þam allayn
So þat oure childe*r* be noght slane,
Lat þam play w*ith* hy*m* fast.
To ih*esus* gyderde þai þan so many
Unhes at hame was *þer* lefte any;
& so befell it at þe last

Þe childer assentyd þam emange
Unto þe wod þat þai wald gayne
Ruttes for to gedyr *þer*
& hew þam mittes & braunches grene
To bryng home *with* þam all bedene,
A com*m*en game als yt war.
Þer was a child boythe wyse & balde,
Þe emp*er*on son & hyght arnalde,
Gret state emang þam bare.
He lufyde wele ihesus compane;
All other childer to þe wod for he
With ih*esus* þa*n* did he fare.

Jesus and other children go to the woods to play.

& qwen þai wer to þe wod come all
Ih*esus* bade þam all bothe gret & small
Noght parte, bot go *in*fere
Ffor dred of dragons and bestys wylde.
Þe childer all þat þis saw þai smylde
Gret skorn ryght als yt wer.
Þai had no3t gon thene ou*er* a myle
Whe*n* *þer* come to þam *with*in a whyle
Lyons & lebardys full sere.
Þe childre for ferd away þai rane;
Up *in*to a gret krukyd tre þai wane
Stode ou*er* a ryuer.

To ih*esus* wald þai do no skayth,
Bot lyons, lybardes, and beres bath
Ffolowed þa*m* to þat tre
& shoked it so þe soyth to tell
Þ*a*t þe childe*r* in þe ryver fell
& drowned þ*a*t was pyte,
& some of þe wilde bestys swam & slogh.
Þe foster come rynand & wele wyste ynogh;
All þis doyng he se
& went and tolde *þer* frendes ylkone
How wyld bestes hase *þer* childyr slone,
Bot ih*esus* na harme had he.

Wild beasts attack and kill the children.

Þe emp*er*one son in þat stede
How þat arnald hys schild was ded
He sorowd on ylka syd.

To mary þan þai went furth full sone
& told hyr all howe ihesus had done;
þe wonder þerof went wyde.
He bad hyr gold full gret plente
To helpe hys child of lyue myght be.
Mary wald noȝt abyde;
Scho sayd, to þe childer wele ȝe kene.
þe emperour toke many armed men
& to þe wod went þat tyd.

Ihesus wyst wele þai wald to hym come,
Forþe of þe wyld bestes slo he some
Olyue lefte lyons two.
Qwhen þe empour was come to grene,
He saw ihesus lyons & hym betwyne
On onather syd go.
[fol. 207b] Ffor ferd þan durst þai come no nere.
Ihesus spake to þam all on far,
Sayd, syrs, why stand ȝe so?
þe bestes þat has ȝowr childer slane,
Lo qwhare þai lige here ded ylkan;
Will ȝe þat I sla mo?

þai durst Not go to hym a fote
& als þe emperour wyst yt was no bote
With ihesus for to stryve,
Bot cryed, qwhare es our childer, qwhare?
He sayd, at ȝone tre take þam þare
& led þam home be lyve.
þe emperour did fech a wayn als gast
& all þe ded childer þer in þai caste;
Ffor þam morned man & wyfe.
Ihesus with þe lyons up and done,
& þe empour men unto þe toune
þe wayne begynnes to dryve.

Jesus restores the dead children and puts dead beasts in their places.

So went þai home & sare þai wepe,
Bot ihesus mad þam sone at slepe
All þat wer with þat wayne.
He ȝod to þe childer þat þer was ded;
He toke þam oute & put in þar sted
þe wyld best þer agayne

& coue*r*d it as it was before.
Þai woke sone & went *with* hert sore
To ton oue*r* þat playne.
Bot arnold & hys felaws all
Played *with* ihe*sus* at þe ball;
Þe*r*of wer þai wele fayne.

Whe*n* þe wayne was come þe cyte myd
Þe empe*r*our did cry & ylk ma*n* byd
Cu*m* tak þe*r* ys awne child.
Þi come & wend on þe*r* childe*r* to loke;
Bot þar wer whe*n* þai þam out toke
Qwarters of best wyld,
Of lyons & libardys þ*at* ihe*sus* slew.
Þan had þai care & sorow ynew
& sayd þai war begyld.
Bot we helpe of myld mary
Euer more may we be sary;
At þ*at* worde mary smyld

& sayd: gudme*n*, be no3t adred;
He þat 3o*ur* childer fro home has led
Bryng hame agayn wele may.
Ffor scho wyst wele hyr son ihe*sus*
Wald no3t leve þer childe*r* þus,
Þ*at* gart hyr so gat say.
& has þai stode spekyng þe*r* lukyd su*m*
& saw ihe*sus* w*ith* þe childer come
Before hy*m* i*n* þe way
W*ith* glad chere faste syngand
& ylkon a grene branche i*n* his hand
Euen like a somyr play.

Þe empe*r*our & all me*n* i*n* þe strete
Ffell doun þe*r* before ihe*sus* fete;
As lord þai gon hy*m* low
& sayd, blist be þu & þi dame,
For þu es comen i*n* godys name;
Ihe*sus*, godis son, aret þow.
Þai bed hym gold & rent3 full fayr
& þe empe*r*our sayd, þu sall be my*n* ayr
& wed my doghter now.

[fol. 208a]

The emperor wishes Jesus to marry his daughter.

Ihesus sayd to hym: swete syr, late be;
Per sall none part my moder & me,
Pe thar non other trow.

Pe emperour & all men þat þer ware
To ihesus durst þai þan say no mare,
Bot let hym do als he wold;
& mary toke hym & hame wente.
Pe emperour to þam gret presantz sent
Boȝth met & drynke & gold.
All þat euer was of Iosep kyne
& dwelled þe cyte þar withyne
Of ihesus war blyth & bolde.
Bot so befell yt in þat same ȝer
Corne in þat cyte was þer so der
Ffor hunger þai dyed thyk folde;

& mykyll of þe folke war at myschyefe.
Grett derth of corn did þan all grefe
& gart þam fayre ryght yll.
Mary þerfore made gret murnyng
& thoght sett some bote of þat thyng.
Scho called ihesus hyr tyll
& sayd: my swete son, thynk wele how
Emang Iosep best frendes er we now
& thynkes to dwell her styll.
Sen þai haue swylk faute of corne,
Helpe þat þe pepyll ne be not lorne
& þus for hunger spyll.

Jesus relieves a famine,

Ihesus þan to hys moder sayde:
Sen Iosep frendes wald be wele payd
& thank ȝou for þis dede
& for ȝe wyll, moder, þat be so,
Unto þe feld þon wyll I go
& help þam in þis nede.
Thre whete cornes he toke sone
& thre of barly withouten hone,
Wald he haue no mor sed.
Before þer folk þis corne he sew
& sayd, I wald þe heyward blew
To repe þis corne ȝe ȝede.

Þus made he þa*n* a new harvest,
& þe folke þai suld noght rest
Bot werk fast ylke a wyght.
All þ*at* myght croke or sekell bere
Went þ*at* corne to repe & schere;
Spared non þ*at* w*er* of myght;
To do þat hervest fast þai rane
& many a cart & wayne þane
Ffull of corn ham þai dyght.
So was þ*at* cete refresshyd wele
& all þat cuntre eue*r* ylka dele
Lovyd ih*esus* day & nyght.

Bot als he welke þ*er* up & down [fol. 208*b*]
Mykyll of þe folke i*n* þ*at* town
He helpid & gaf þ*am* met, and performs other miracles.
Se mekyll þat w*ith* a laf of brede
A thowsand of pur folke i*n* þ*at* sted
Had all yonw at ete.
Þe croked & lame he made so ryght;
Þe blynd also he gayf þare syght,
& temples don did he bete
W*ith* þer fals gods & mad all clene.
To god þa*n* turned þai all bedene
Þe folke bath small & grett.

Whe*n* þis was done soyth to tell,
Ih*esus* wald þer no lenger dwell
Bot went yheyn soyth to say.
And mary hys mod*er* at hame styll was;
& also Iosep myght noȝt þem passe,
For þ*at* tyme selke he lay.
Bot Iosep come sone w*ith*owten flyke
Unto a cete men calles affryke;
& þ*at* cete þ*at* same day
A lyster stude þer hym agayne
& sayd, wyne es þu ȝong swayn,
& whid*er* ert þu on way?

Ih*esus* answerd þa*n* als hy*m* thoght
& sayd: whyne þ*at* I am rek þe noȝt,
Bot þis ton come I tyll

Jesus meets a lyster and agrees to work for him.

Ffor to seke thyng þat hys loste
& pay þerfore more þan yt coste.
Þat, sayd he, was no skyll.
Bot ihesus ment it be mans kynde
How he for þat syn suld be pynde
On rode tre on ane hyll.
Þe lyster sayd, lat swylke worde be;
Þe es better lere a crafte with me
& dwell here with me styll.

Ihesus answerd, what crafte hys itt?
He sayd: son, þu sall lere to lytt;
Ffor þi come with me swyth.
Ihesus sayd blethly þat he wald.
Hys wyfe when scho gon hym beholde
Of ihesus was glad & blyth.
Scho sayd: swete son, withouten doute
Þu may noȝt now all day ryn oute
& fro þi werk go lyghtly,
Ffor þe bus besy be here at hame.
He sayd blethly in goddes name
No maistris wald he kythe.

Þe lyster sayd: son, be now ware,
Ffor our bischope abyathare
Thre rych clothes sent me to.
Ane bus be blew, a noder rede,
Þe thyrd grene, ylkon in ser lede;
Be leve luke þat þu do
[fol. 209a] & make gude fyres under all thre,
Ffor tyll our neghburs wend will we
An erand boyth I and scho,
& gar þam bule be we come agayne.
Ihesus sayd þat he walde full fayne
Elles suld he be by þat bro.

Þe dyer & hys wyfe out went,
Jesus leaves his work to play. & ihesus haues þe thre clothes hent
& kest all in a lede.
He made gret fyre þer under gude spede,
& sythen out all þe dore he ȝede;
He bade no lenger in þat stede.

Þe childer of þe strete out did he call
& played *þer with* þam at þe bawll;
Þai welterd all ars ou*er* hede.
Þe lyst*er* spak þa*n*: ryse up þu dame,
Yt hys gude þat we ga hame.
Scho sayd: syr, so I rede,

Ffor ȝe lefte at hame a wanto*n* childe
And lyghtly may ȝe be begylede
Yf ȝe dwell fro hy*m* lang.
Þai heghed þa*m* hame *with*outen dyn,
Bot whe*n* þai fand noght ih*esus* yn
Þai lest wele of no sang.
Qwhen þe clothes *in* a lede þai fand
With fyre & water full fast buland
Ffor dole *þer* handes þai wrang.
Þe lyst*er* wepyd als he wer wode;
Ih*esus* come in þa*n* als he stude;
He sayd he sulde hym hang.

Ladd, he sayd, why did þu þus?
Þu has ffordone both þe & us,
Þa*t* sall þu by full dere.
A gret fyre brand at hy*m* he kest;
Yt stode up & floryst *þer* of þe best,
A fayre tre als it were.
Ih*esus* sayd: mayst*er*, be noȝt wroght;
Yf ȝe of my servys be lothe,
A byd speke *with* me here.
I sall boyth our worships salve;
Loke qwhat colo*ur* þat ȝe wyll sawe
& draw yt out *with* gude chere.

Þe lyst*er* ȝode to hys ledd full tyte
& drew a cloth he wend war whyte,
Bot yt was scarlet bryght.
A nodther cloth þa*n* out he drew,
& yt was one of þe best blew
Þa*t* eu*er* he had of syght.
He drew þe thryde & yt was grene;
A god, he sayd, what may þis mene?
Þe clothes er full wele dyght.

The lyster returns.

He threatens Jesus.

The cloths come out properly dyed.

Child, þou sall lere me more to draw
& dwell styll here als my felaw;
þu seruys a gayne þe ryght.

[fol. 209b]

Jesus leaves the lyster.

Ihesus sayd nay, þat wald he noght,
Bot bad hym tech furthe als he had wroght
And laue it with no man;
And als of þi mystere
Ne of no nother nedes me to lere,
Ffor of all thyng I can.
Þus toke he þer hys leue and went.
Þe lyster þan þe clothes hame sent
To þe byshop how or he blan.
All meruayld gretly þat þer ware
And sayd, swylke colours saw we neuer are
Ne half so wele lyt þan.

He told þam ryght als yt was
& how þe child fro hym gon has;
Þan hade þai mervele all.
Bot als ihesus went thurgh þe strete
Mekyll of þe pepyll gon he mete
With vessels gret & small.
To fech þam water þai come þat while
Att a well was þen thre myle,
Ffor nar haue none þai sall.
Ihesus wente with þam sothe to say
& euer he spyred þam be þe way
How þat thyng myght befall.

Þai sayde it was euer a wary sone,
Ffore ane of þe rychest man of þat ton
Aught it withouten doute
& sald þerof water full dere,
Ffor þer was none þe ton so ner
Of all þe plasses þer aboute.
Ihesus sayd þan it were no syn
To make water nerrer þe ton to ryn
At bere bothe ship & shout.
Som sayd þan do þat thyng may none
Other þan grette god sone allone;
Ryght so sayd all þe rout.

When þai unto þe wele were comen
& ilk man had hys mesure nom(e)n
  To pay þai war ryght fayne
Unto hys seruant *þat* þat well aght.
Ih*esus* *in* hys lappe water raght,
  Went ham w*ith* þ*am* agayne.
A bown affryke þ*an* stode a hyll;
Ih*esus* sayd þer þe folke untyll:
  Wald noght, syrres, ou*er* þis playne
Twa stremes of water ryn ryght wele
And serve þe town ever ylka dele
  W*ith*outen peny or payn?

Jesus brings water to a dry town.

Þai sayd all, ȝa, w*ith*outen drede,
& it were a grete almosse dede
  Who myght gar it be done.
Ih*esus* bade þan þe folke abyde;
He ȝode to þe hell þai stode besyde,
  Hys wat*er* he kest down sone.
Ih*esus* bad two stremes þat tyde [fol. 210*a*]
Ryn to þe tou*n* on aither syde;
  Þai did so w*ith*outen hone.
Ieron called he þ*er* þe tane,
Þe to*þer* wat*er* þ*an* called he dane;
  Þus had þai all þ*er* bone.

Man & woman all *þat* þ*er* was
Prayd ih*esus* þ*an* he suld noȝt pas
  Bot wende w*ith* þ*am* to woun.
Þis thyng was sone emang þ*am* tolde,
Agayne hy*m* boyth ȝonge come & olde
  W*ith* grett p*ro*cessyon
& sayd ylkone: we wate wele now
Þat i*n* gods name comen es yow,
  Gods son of gret renown,
& oure saueour sall yow be als.
Þ*er* tempils full of gods so fals
  Þai stroyed & bet all down

Jesus prophesies his death.

& sayde: þis ys a kyndnes grete,
What sall we do þe for þis s*er* benfete?
  Lefe lord, will þu us tell?

He sayd: in god trowes stedfastly
& qwe*n* ȝe se þe prophisy
Ffulfilled þer*with* ȝe dwell,
W*ith* my dedes yf ȝe now wele thynke
ȝe sall here efter gyfe me to drynke
Gall & full soure aisell.
All at þis word þa*n* thoght gret shame;
Ilkon fro ihe*sus* þan stale þai hame
Þat tyme it þus befell.

He goes to Jerusalem.

Ffro thyn to Ierslem þan went ihe*sus*,
& þat tyme i*n* þ*at* cete was yt þus:
Þ*er* dwelt þe wysest me*n*
& most conand in all clerge
Þ*at* was in all þer Iewrye
Ou*er* whare lyfand þan.
Wit*h* þam thoght ihe*sus* dispute þe law
At se by clarge yf þai couth knaw
Whar cr*i*ste was born & qwhen,
How þ*at* þai suld not be excused
Þe law wrangfully yf þai used
& noȝt hy*m* for oure cr*i*ste kene.

Joseph and Mary go in search of Jesus.

Bot mary thynkes lang scho ihe*sus* myst,
& qwhore to fynd hy*m* no thyng scho wyst
Ne whiderward he was rone.
Ffor þi unto Iosep scho spake
& sayd þe way þ*at* þai bud take
To seke ihe*sus* þ*er* son.
Iosepe sayd þan, I hope he be
W*ith* oure frendys i*n* þis contre,
Hop I he sall be son.
Þa*n* sayd mary, we wyll go loke.
Ayther of þa*m* an asse þai toke,
Went þid*er* þ*er* þai suld won;

[fol. 210b]

They hear of his miracles.

Bot thurgh þe co*n*tre als þai bath past
Þe pepyll tald how ihe*sus* helyd faste
Mykyll folke of sere seknesse,
& blynd men how he gart þam se,
Croked & lame all hale mad he
So gret was hys gudnes;

Of men & women deulles catched he oute
& mad þer templis clene all aboute
Of fals gods mar & lesse.
Bot mary & josep er wrath als wynd,
Ffor þi myght nour of ihesus fynde ;
None couth tell war he hys.

At þe laste into jherusalem come þai,
& preuely þer spired þam allway
Yf ihesus was oght þare.
Bot tythandes of hym hard þai non talde,
Ffor he couthe be ay when he walde
Invisibele euer ay ware ;
& so apon a day yt stude
Mary & Iosep to þe tempil ȝode
Whare þer clarkes gedyr war.
Þai lokyd & ihesus syttand saw
Emang þe doctours of þe law
Apposand þam sad & sar

& with hys argument gretly þam newd,
Ffor ylkon of þame he conclude
Euen in þer awn sayng ;
So þat all þas þat myght hym here
Had wondyr whare swylk a child suld lere.
To be so wysse of doyng.
Ffor shame nerehand þer wytt þai loysed
When ihesus answerde or apposede,
So gracious was hys spekyng.
& so a gret doctour þam layd
A buke befor ihesus & prayd
Hym red þerof som thyng.

Ihesus oppend þat buke with hys hand
& son before opon he fand
Of þe prophete Isaye.
Lo, he sayd, ȝe docturs dere,
Of myselfe now fynd I here
Wretyn a sȫth prophecye :
Þe halygast on me es lyght
& enoynt me þerfore with ryght
& sent me oppenly

They find Him disputing with the doctors in the temple.

To preche þe folke heuen how þai sall wyn
& caytyfs & wreches of þar syn
Fforgyfnes þ*at* askes m*er*cy ;
& als of gods gudnes to teche
Of g*r*a*c*e & meknes for to preche
To all þ*at* wyll do wele,
& days of vengeaunce at shew þ*am* tyll
Þ*at* er synfull and thynkes do yll
To pon*n*ysh þ*er* dedes ylka dele.
Wh*en* ih*esus* had red þe buke he fold
& gayf yt þe docturs agayn to hold ;
To ih*esus* þ*an* did he knele ;
Þai war so wondred of hys wytt
Ffor shame myght þai no lang*er* syt
Bot stale away wyt*h* unsele.

[fol. 211*a*] Ih*esus* saw mary & Iosep sone ;
He went to þ*am* wi*th*outen hone.
Scho sayd : swete son ih*esus*,
What ayld þe & why dyd yow so ?
Lo, þi fadyr & I wyth mykyll wo
Has soght þe hedyr þus.
He sayd : to seke me no3t 3ow nedes,
Ffor wyt 3e wele i*n* my fader dedes
All way be me bus ;
& moder, 3e wot I am sent þ*er*to.
Mary sayd, at þi wyll ay yow do ;
Bot now co*me* forth w*ith* us.

Ih*esus* went w*ith* þam w*ith*awten lett
& served þam boyth als þe sugett
By þe way als þai 3ede.
Ih*esus*, son, thynk one þi selfe,
Ffor 3ow passes ou*er* 3e 3heres twelf
Lyke now to do mans dede.
Help mary, þi moder, for I am no3t,
Ffor whyls I myght allway I wroght
Us both to cleth & fede ;
Bot certes now may I wyrke no more
Ne no3t wele ga for faynte and sore
Bot yf su*m* ma*n* me lede.

Ffor þi to nazareth bryng me ones ; They return to Nazareth.
þar thynke I rest my ald bones
Unto my lyfys ende.
Mary sayd : son sall ȝe come thyder ;
My son and I boythe togyder
Sall ȝou makess amende.
At nazareth war þay þan full sone,
& Iosep in hys bed was done ;
He fare þan sone wende.
Ffor febyll & faynt he began to grone ;
How nere hys ded was west þer non
Bot ihesus þat all thyng kend.

Bot Iosep frendes come hym sport to make
& broght wyne & spyces for hys sake
Yf he war seke bestade ;
Bot þai made gret dole in þat sted,
Ffor one of þar childer was dede,
A frend þat Iosep had.
Mari hard þam sore for hym murne ;
Scho thoght þer sorow sone to turne,
Fforþi hyr son scho bad
þat þe child myght leve agayne ;
& ihesus said he walde full fayne ;
þan war hys frendes al glad.

He went furth fast unto þat stede Jesus restores a dead child.
þer þe gude mans child was dede ;
He lukyd on hym þat ded lyse.
He was a neghbour þe alther nexst ;
& ihesus touchyd hym on þe breste,
Bad, þu ded child upryse
& lyf, for yow sall noȝt dy ȝhytt.
Ilke man wondyr þan in hys wyt
þat he wroght on swylke wyse.
Ffra ded to lyfe he hym raysyd ;
þerfore he was ful mykyll praysyd
Als lorde of gret pryse.

& als he went hamward be þe strete [fol. 211b]
A blynd man þan gon he mete ;
His frendes about hym stod,

He heals a blind man.

Ffor hys comyng alway þai spied.
When ihesus come þe blynde man cryed,
Leve lorde, do me sum gud.
He sayd, what wyll þou of me crave?
Lorde, my eyne syght walde I haue
Yf þu wald frely fode.
Ihesus bad hym stand up and luke;
He saw als sone as þe buke;
With ihesus hale furth he ȝude.

He heals divers diseases.

Oythyr sek men broght þai hym also
& men traueland wyth deuels two
Out of þer wyt war clene,
All bunden wer þai broght byfor hym.
Ihesus bad, come out, þu delves lym;
Be fro for þe folke al bedene.
At hys byddyng þe wycked spiryt3
Come out, þan had þe men þar wythytt,
Both hale & sownd þai bene.
& ihesus sayd: þas deuels blake
To wildernes þer flyght to take
Neuer mar thar efte be sene.

All þat wyll euer on hym trowe,
What euele or seknes þat ȝe haf now
ȝe sall be hale þus sone.
Þe pepyll turnyd þan unto hym fast
& prayed god lang hys lyf suld last
Als he shop son & mone.
Bot some of þe trybes of ysraell
So tyte als þai hard here of tell
& how ihesus had done
To Iosep & mary sone went þai.
Bot Iosep bedredyn þat tyme lay
Ffull febyll þat west bot frone;

The people ask Mary who Jesus is.

Ffor þai to mary þai spak, I wys,
& sayd: yow dame, whays child es þis
Þat ded folke mau þus rays
& sawes þe pepyll þat on hym trowes?
Es þu hys moder & þis þi awowes?
Tell us tytt qwhat þu says.

Scho sayd: for sothe hys moder am I,
& als god lykes turght hys mercy
  Myself suld I noȝt prays;
Bot of my body certes I hym bare.
Þai sayd: blyssed be þu euere mare
  & so be he alw(a)ys,

Ffor now þan wote we ylkon wele
Hys power comes of ylka dele;
  Loved be god nyght & day
Þat haues us swylk a prophet sent.
Mary þer wordes wyth gud entent
  In hyr hert held scho ay.
Bot Iosep drawes to dedward fast;
Hys tyme es come; he may noȝt last;
  Þat hym bus wend hys way;
Þus made he in Nazareth hys endyng.
Mary broght hym to fayre beryng;
  God haue his sawle þat best may.

Now haue ȝe harde how Iosep endes
& grauen was þer emang hys frendes
  In Nazareth als ȝe here;
Bot mary eftyr hym scho dwelt þer syne
With anna, hyr moder, & with Emeryne
  Þat boyth ful sisters wer.
Of emeryne was borne be cryste
Elyȝabeth, þe moder o Iohn baptyste
  Þat was gods derlyng dere;
& of anna was borne sykyrly
Goddes moder of heuen, myld mary,
  Blyssed be scho fer & nere.

& sone when Ioachym dede was
Anna was wede to cleophas;
  And a doghter had scho þare.
Þe secunde mary þai called hyr so;
Þe childe was wede to alpheo,
  & James alphet scho bare
& Iosep, hys brother; so two scho had.
Bot when cleophas was so bestrade
  Þat he myght lyfe no mare,

Joseph dies.

[fol. 212*a*]

Mary lives with her mother, Anne.

Joachim dies and Anne marries Cleophas.

After his death she marries Salome.

Anna þe thryde tyme wedded suld be
Unto ane husband þat hyght salame,
  Þis was a ferly fare.

She has a daughter, Mary, by each husband.

Þe thryd mary *with* hym had scho,
& ȝebedee was þat chyld wed to,
  A wysman of lyffyng.
Scho bare two chylder wele men weste,
Iames ȝebedei & Iohn Euangeliste ;
  Þis was a blyst beryng.
& þerfore als þe story standys,
Anna scho had thre husbandes
  & bare thre marys ȝhyng.
Þe chylder þus of þere two marys
Ffolowed þe thryd in gods seruys ;
  Þus bade þai cristes commyng.

Jesus is head of the house.

So *with* anne & all þat progene
Dwelled mary styll in þat cete,
  In naȝareth a gret thraw ;
& ihesus was in þar company ;
Bot for he was wyse & most myghty
  Þai stode of hym gret aw,
So mykyll þat þai wald no day ete
To þai had dyght for hym hys sete
  Als he lykyd hegh or law.
No bred to ete wald þai none take
Unto he blyssed yt & efter brake,
  & sythen þai gayf on raw ;

Next him is Mary.

& when þat ihesus was oght fra home
Mary in hys stede scho come,
  & all þat menȝhe he blyste ;
For scho was gude & full of grace ;
Þerfore next ihesus in þat place
  Held þai hyr þan þe beste.
Bot ihesus he ȝode whore þat he wolde,
Ffor þan was he fyften ȝer alde
  & to gret doyng hym kest,
For man & woman of sere seknes
He helyd þat trowed on hym mor & les
  & deluels out of þam kest.

[fol. 212b]

Jesus heals many.

So was hys dedes gretly alowed
& mykyll of þe folke þat on hym trowed
Sayd þat wer seke bestade
Myght þai bat touche hys cote heme
Þai suld be hale withouten weme
Of what yuel þat þai hade.
So gret vertu out of hym sprang
Þat mykyll folke trowed yt þam emang
With stedfast trough & sade ;
& by þat moheson many a man
Solde and gayfe þat þai hade þan
& folowyd hym with hert glad.

Þai held yt so trew þat he þam techid,
For in all places euer he þam prechede
Of þe kyngdom of heuene,
What yoy & blys þat þai suld haue
Þat walde þer saules ffro syn save
More þan any tong couth neuen.
Bot als þai folowed hym on a day
A leperous man sat be þe way,
To ihesus with ful myld steuen
* * * * * *
* * * * * *
* * * * *

Ihesus sayd, man, tell me þi tale.
What wyll þu ? Lorde, he sayd, be hale
Yf þat þi wyll ware.
& ihesus sayd : I wyll hale þe nowe.
Be hale & trewly on me trowe ;
Þu sall be seke no mare ;
Bot go now, schryfe þe to þe pryste
& after to god þan alther neste
Als moyses bad al bare.
Þe man did all as ihesus sayde
& was all hale ; þan was he payde
& folowed ay furth his fare.

ȝytt bade ihesus he suld no man tell,
Bot mykyll þe more how yt befell
He told in ylka place ;

& þe folk trowed hym wele enoghe.
Forþi to ihesus þe more þai droghe
& besoght hym ay of grace.
So þer was a lorde hyght Centurio
& unto ihesus þan sayd he so
Efter þis a lytell space:
Lord, my son full seke he lyse;
Help hym & make hym hale to ryse
I pray þe in þis case.

Ihesus sayd, I come alsone
To hele þi childe without hone.
Centurio sayd: noȝt, nay
I am noȝt worthy me so bonetyuose
Þat þu suld entyr within my house;
Fforþi do noȝt bot say
& I trow hale he sall be þane,
For in oure law am I swylke man
Þat so mykyll do I may:
To knyghtes þat under me er I wyse
Wylk of þam all I byde do þis
He dose yt sone allway.

[fol. 213a]

& whilke of my seruands þat I bide go
He rynnys & dosse my will also
What sall be done & howe;
Þerfore, lorde, yf þi welles be
Þi byddyng suffys enogh to me.
* * * * *
* * * * * *
* * * * * *
Here may ȝe se mek hert bow,
For so trew trowth in Isaraell
Als I here now centureo tell
Ffand I neuer ȝyt als now.

Jesus heals a centurion's son.

Þerfore sayd ihesus centurio untyll:
Gude man, it sall be als þu wyll;
For þu in trowth es trew.
Þi child sall þan be hale als faste
& in þi trouth yf þow wyll laste
It sall þe neuer more rew.

Hys saruandes hyghed hame þat stound
& fand hys child both hale & sound.
Þam made þar myrth enowe;
Þai fell down & kyst ihesus fette
& sayde, þis passes state of prophete.
For gods son þai hym knewe.

Fra thyne to galile ihesus 3ode,
& als he past furth be þe se flode
Two brether þer he saw;
Peter, andrew both in a bote
Wer fessheres & went þe soth I wote
Fysshe for to take & draw.
Ihesus sayd to þam: comes, folowes me,
For fisshers of men þan sall 3e be
& lay þis crafte full law.
Þai forsoke bath shyp and nete
& folowed hym fourth withoutyn lette
Of his lare mare to knaw.

Jesus goes to Galilee and chooses six disciples.

Bot als þai went furth forthermar
Another bote saw þai þam before,
Thre wer þerin I wene,
3ebedee & als hys childer two,
Iames & Iohn euangelist, was þer no mo;
Of fysshyng had þai bene.
Þer netes for old wer alto bryste
& þai mad þam agayn & dreste.
Bot ihesus with wordes full clene
Sayd to þaim two, folowes me belyve.
Þer fader & nettes all lat þai dryve
& folowed hym boyth bedene.

Bot forther in galilee als ihesus went
He met a man of full trew intent,
& phelipp þan es his name,
Ffor he was borne in bethsayda
& þat same cete come he fra,
For þer was he at hame.
Ihesus bad hym, folow me now.
To hys byddyng sone did bow
Lett nouther for bleth no blame

Bot folowed hym furth als uther dyd.
With petir & andrew was it so betyd
Þai & mo did þe same.

So tyll a ton þai soth to wyt
& þer saw ihesus a toller sytt,
Mathew hys name it was.
[fol. 213b] Ihesus spake to hym on þis wysse :
Come, folow me & fro þin þu ryse
In mendyng of þi trespas.
Mathew lefte son all þat he hade
& folowed hym furth with hert glade
To what place he wald passe.
Þus had he sex onward o twelfe
Þat he had chosen chife for hymselfe
Of þe dissiples þat he has.

Bot in kaane of galele þare besyd
A gret brydell was dyght þat tyde
With many men of menȝe
Thurgh ane archityclyne, a gret lord,
And als þe boke beres gud recorde
Most mayster of þat cete.
Bytwene whame þat brydell suld bene
Haue I in boke noȝt wretyn sene ;
Þerfor lat I þam be.
Bot myld mary was prayd to be þer
& oþer women þat hyr cosyns war
For gret solempnyte.

Jesus attends a marriage and turns water into wine.

Als sone so archityclyne had understand
Þat jhesus was þar in þat land
He prayd hym to þe brydall ;
& he drest hym sone thyder to come ;
Of hys dyssipelys þan broght he sum—
Þai come noȝt with hym all.
Bot because ihesus þat was þan his gest
Þai were wele serued ryght of þe best
With wild foule gret & small
& other dayntesȝ full gud & gret.
Bot als þai wer in myddes þer mette
Þis farly þer gun fall :

Er þai had ettyn þai wantyd wyne.
Þe seruantez̄s had þan sorow & pyne
& gretly marned þai all
& sayd, allas þat þai war borne;
Our lorde honour & ours er lorne,
For wyne what sall we say?
Mary herd how þai sayd & whatt;
Scho sayd to ihesus þer he satt:
Son, þer wyne es away.
To hyr agayn þusgat sayd he:
Woman, what es þat to þe & me?
My tyme es noȝt þis day.

Scho sayd: ȝys, for honour of þis fest
& also, son, at my beheste
Kepe þaim fro velany.
Þan west scho wele do somqwat he wald;
Fforþi þe seruandȝes to hir scho cald
& bad þaim prevely,
What so þat my sone byddes ȝow do
Luke be leve þat ȝe ga þer to
& do yt sone & smerthly.
Sex gret water pottes stude þar
Þat for purificacon ordand war
By þe law of Iewry.

Ihesus sade þe seruandȝes untyll,
Full of water þas pottes ȝe fyll;
& qwen ȝe haue so don
Ffyll oute of þe lykour þat in þaim er [fol. 214a]
& to architiclyne ȝe itt bere,
Pray hym drynk þerof sone.
Þe seruandȝes did ryght als ihesus bad
& filled þe peces with hert full glad,
Wald þai no langar hone.
Þai bare yt in & gaf to architiclyne.
He sayd: syre spous, whyne come þis wyne
For hym þat syttes in trone?

Ffor be my taste full wele me thynke
Þat I drank neuer are so gud drynke
Sen I to man was wroght.

Þe seruandtȝes wyst wele ynoghe
Wheyn yt come, for þai yt droghe,
Bot þe spous wyst it noȝt;
& has used ȝyt eu*er* more
To serve þe best wyne eu*er* before
It drynke whils þai*m* gude thoght;
Sythen wers whe*n* me*n* had dronken wele,
Bot þis hys þe best assay and felle
Ffor soth þ*at* now es broght.

They recognize the Christ.

Þus haue ȝe ȝemed gud wyne till now
For spous, spyrs þi seruandeȝs how
Þis best come i*n* hande.
Bot how ih*esus* made yt whe*n* þai whyst
Hys comyng þider ylkon þai blyssyd
& his fett kist kneland.
Son hys disciples ylka man
Trowed wele þ*at* he was godes son þan
Be þ*at* ferly þ*at* þai fand.
Þis was þe fyrst myracle of all
Byfore Hys dissiples i*n* þ*at* hall
Þ*at* ih*esus* did i*n* þat land.

Ffor þis fayre myracle & o*per* mo
Mykell folke gonn *with* ih*esus* go
To what place als he ȝed,
& whore he welke thurgh any strett
Seke folke drest þam hy*m* to mette
Þ*at* of hys help had ned.
Croked & lame bath þai to hy*m* led
& som þ*at* lay bedredyn i*n* þ*er* bed;
& he w*ith*outen drede
All þ*at* eu*er* wald trow one hym
He made þai*m* hale i*n* lyth & lym,
& þ*at* þai folowed hy*m* gud spede.

Bot als þai went to Ierico warde
A blynd ma*n* satt be þe way & harde
Mykyll folke walkand forby.
He spyrde som what myght be mene,
& þai sayde Ihesus nazarene
Com be þ*at* way sykyrly.

To cry full lowde þan he begone
& sayd, þow ihesus, dauid sone,
Of þis blynd haue mercy.
Som men þat ȝode ihesus before
Blamed hym & bad hym cry no more,
Bot he þe faster ay did cry.

When ihesus com forgayn þat stede [fol. 214b]
Þer þe blend man satt to beg hys bred — Jesus heals a blind man.
& hard hym so cry & rare,
He bad byfore hym he suld be broght;
Bot als he come ȝyt he sesyd noȝt
To cry he wald noȝt spare.
He sayd, what wald þu I did fore þe?
Lorde, noȝt bot make me for to se
Yf þat þy wyll ware,
Ffor þu may do yt of þi gret myght.
Ihesus sayd, þu sall haue þi syght.
Bad hym se, sayd he na mare,

& þe trew trouth man sall þi salve.
He lovyd god & sayd, now I haue
Myn egh syght fayre & clere. — Many believe on him.
Ylke man he told how yt betyd
& folowed hym furth als oþer dyd,
Hys dissiple als he were.
Thurghout þat land boyth old & ȝyng
All þat harde of Ihesus doyng
Trowed on hym boyth fer & ner.
Ihesus lefte þaim in a cete,
Toke þaim þat suld hys postils be,
Went furth by a reuer;

& als he wēnt byfore allone
Behynd hym come petyr & jone
& oþer apostils yll payd.
For þai sayde ilkon als þai ȝode,
Emang us all bere we no gude
Na for us es noȝt pervade;
Þis es to us a full hevy lyffe
At forsake catell, childer, & wyfe
Or walke yll þus arayde.

& nothyng es us hyght *in* certayn
What we sall haue þ*er*fore agayne.
Fforþi to ih*esus* peter sayd :

Jesus tells his disciples what their rewards shall be.

Lorde, þai þ*at* all þis warlde forsakes
& to þi techyng trowes & takes
& walkes w*ith* þe allway
Þis sympil lyfe w*ith* þe to lede,
What we sall haue þ*er*fore to mede,
Lefe lorde, wyll þu us say?
ȝe þ*at* þis warld for me refuse
& my techyng wyll trowe & use
ȝe sall won w*ith* me ay.
Bot specially say I unto ȝow twelfe
Þ*at* ȝe sall sytt ryght w*ith* my selfe
& deme þis world on domes day.

ȝa & all þ*at* eu*er* forsakes & leves
Ffor my lufe landes, rentes, & greues,
Catell, corn, & me*n*,
Wyfs & childer, syluer & glode,
Þai sall haue þ*er*fore a hundreth fold
I wot wele whore & qwhe*n*.
And als þai sall haue þe blys of heuen
Whare joy ys more þ*an* tung may neuen
Or eye may se or ken.

[fol. 215*a*]

Vnto þ*at* gret blys he us bryng,
Ih*esus* of wham es made þis thyng,
Þ*er*to says all amen.

You have now heard Christ's story as John the evangelist wrote it.

Now haue ȝe harde yf ȝe take hede
Of ih*esus* mykyll & hys chyldhede
Þ*at* he did in his yhouth
Tyll tyme he come into mans state
Als saynt Iohn eu*a*ngelyst it wrate,
For next hy*m* best he couth;
& als þe boke says who yt drew
Ih*esus* þe fyrst of all in grew
Made yt w*ith* hys awn mouth.
Ffor he was all relygyus þan
& þ*at* tyme religion fyrst began
Þ*er*of thynkes som sel couth.

Bot saynt mathew eftyrward wele & fyn
Out of grew turnyd yt in latyn
& had þus in doyng
At þe prayer of bysshopes two,
Cromassi and Elydon men called þai so,
Twa gude men of lyfyng.
& for all þis ȝyt es þer some
Þat says it es apocrysome
& none autentyk thyng.
Bot þer es nathyng done thynk me
Þat yt by possybylyte
May be of gods wirkyng.

& sen he become man for our gude
& touke als we haue flessh & blude
In mary mayden wemlesse,
Thurgh kynde of man þan burd hym nedes
In hys ȝong age do some child dedes
Has saynt paule beres wytnesse.
For þus he says & yt so betyd,
When I was child, child dedes I dyd
& als a child wyt es;
& when to man stat I was broght
I voyde my child dedes & þan wroght
Als a man dos neuerþelesse.

Þus ihesus wroght on þis same wysse
& also mad he mo maystryse
Emang þe Iewes so kene
Þat þai suld trow in hym yf þai wold
& als god sone hym ken and holde
For myracles þat wer sene.
Bot for þai hym & hys refusyd
Ffra pyne þai sall noȝt be excused
On domysday als I wene.
Þus es þis made for mans lernyng.
God graunt us heuen at our endyng;
Says all amen bedene.

Explicit Tractatus Bonus.

St. Matthew later wrote the story in Latin. It is called apocryphal.

II

The Life of St. Anne

MS. Trin. Coll. Camb. 601
(English Poets R. 3. 21).

[fol. 221*a*] Incipit Vita *Sancte* Anne matris *Sancte* Marie Virginis

Invocation.

O blyssyd Ihū that art full of myght
The ground of *ver*tu and of all goodnes,
Qwykyn my derkenes and send me som lyght,
Ffor in the ys verray sykernes ;
Be my comfort and streyngth my febylnes
In that I wold take on me for to wryte,
Mekely besechyng thy grace to endyte.

Confession of weakness.

Ffor in my sylf ryght well I undyrstand
My wytte but sympyll and lak eke of connyng,
Ffull vnabyll to take suche thyng on hand,
Weyke of spyryt and febyll in doyng
Sauyng oonly by the gret supportyng;
Wherfore good lord now make I my request
To quyte me lyke as hyt pleseth the best.

Gret foly were and also presumpsion
In hym that ys both naked and bareyn

The results of a collation of the poem on the life of St. Anne contained in MS. Chetham 8009 with that in Trinity College, Cambridge, 601 (R. 3. 21) are given herewith. Variant spellings have been neglected, but an effort has been made to give all variant readings contained in the Chetham MS. version of the poem. My thanks are due to the Librarian of the Chetham Society, Mr. Charles T. E. Phillips, who made a copy of the poem contained in the Chetham MS. The variant readings are taken from this copy, which has been collated with photographic reproductions of twelve of the twenty-two pages of the MS. This collation revealed only two errors of consequence. The accuracy of the copy, therefore, may be accepted with confidence. Incipit Vita, *etc.*, *is omitted.*

6. For *is omitted.* 8. . . I ryght wel . . . 10. . . suche a thyng . . . 15. Also *is omitted.*

As in makyng to lak discrecion
Where nothyng ys to harde were to constreyn;
The trouth to sey I wyll be to yow pleyn,
I am vnpurueyed and in nowyse sure
Safe my good wyll feyne wold I put in vre.

Thus half in feare, somdell in cowardyse,
Whyche ys in man a gret displesure,
Sore I am troubled many sondry wyse—
Nothyng acordyng vnto my plesure,
But euyn clene contrary to my desyre.
I wold be sory truly to offend;
Natwithstandyng to labour I entend.

Ffrom heuen cometh helpe ys an old prouerbe,
Wherfore I wyll take now to me corage.
God yaue vertu both to stone and herbe
Whiche be vnresonable as in parage;
He were to blame and also gret damage
That hath hys wytte ioynyd to reson
But yef he occupy well hys seson.

The author looks to heaven for help.

Hyt ys a vertu to rede in storyes [fol. 221*b*]
And holy seynts lyfes to translate.
Hit causeth to be in the memoryes
Of well disposyd pepyll in good state—
To theym where grace ys nothyng desolate
But by perseueraunce theym to apply,
Sore repentaunce puttyng awey foly.

The value of reading and translating saints' lives.

Ffor he that ys repentaunt as I rede
Mercy to hym cannot be denyed.
Gentyll Ihū hys owne body dyd sprede
Ffor all synners on the crosse belyed
And of the cruell iewes defyed;
Wherfore take me now vnto thys good hede,
He neuer faylyd creature at nede.

He that for helpe lyst mekely to hym call,
He ys redy to euery good entent.

22. . . and sumwhat . . . 25. . . to my . . . 42. Sore repentant . . . 46. . . lyed . . . 48. . to þat . . .

To let, I wyll nat what soeu*er* befall;
I wyll kepe forth my pu*r*pose as I ment.
More hardynes the good lord hath me sent
A gret dell then I had at the begynnyng;
I trust hys grace shall bryng hit to endyng.

To be rebukyd, lo, I were to blame
In myn owne mynde for doyng my dewte.
Of ve*r*tuous labo*ur* cam neue*r* yet shame,
Ffor idylnes ys nought in no degre
The moder of vyce ys I am in suerte;
Therfore I wyll besy me to spede
And call aboue for help when I haue nede.

The three great virtues: mercy,

In hym ys me*r*cy; in hym ys pyte;
Beware ye cruell herts me*r*cyles!
Remember hym well; take good hede and se;
Put clene fro you yowr froward crewelnes;
Ye shall repent hit to sore els dowteles,
Ffor man wi*th*out me*r*cy me*r*cy shall mys;
He shall haue me*r*cy that me*r*cifull ys.

[fol. 222*a*]

Bethynk yow well on thys noble story
Of pore lazar and diues in yo*ur* mynde—
How ryche he was and now ys so sory
Because to lazar he was so vnkynde.

pity,

Ffor lak of grace he was to blynde
In worldly ryches wi*th*outen pyte;
Fforeue*r*more therfor dampnyd ys he.

O noble ve*r*tu callyd pyte
That art so gret in the hygh court aboue,
Well ys hym that endewed ys wi*th* the
Whyche came downe clerely for ve*r*rey loue
Ffor worldly ioy neyther to heve ne shoue.
Neue*r* man yet red in holy scripture
A peteous man dampnyd, thys am I sure.

52. . . . what so befalle. 53. I wyll kepe forth myne entent. 58. . . . to do my dute. 61. Ys *is omitted.* 62. . . . to proceed. 75. . . . *per*de he wase blynd. 78. . . . I callyd petye. 81. Which camest doune for very pure love. 82. . . . nether heve . . . 83. . . . rede yet . . .

O p*er*fyte charyte whyche are wit*h*outen pere, charity.
Thow art best werthy forto haue the thre
And to be worshyppyd ferre and nere,
Ffor all v*er*tues byn groundyd apon the,
Ffeythe and hope of thy consanguinite.
He that these iij lacketh ys but clene shent;
Wo shall he be that hath hys tyme so spent.

I lowly make now me peticion Petition to 'masters.'
To all masteres that thys shall here or rede,
Submyttyng me to yowre c*or*reccion,
Ffor vnconnyng my symple penne doth lede
As a voyce in feare and eke in drede;
Thys ys the fyrst and eke the begynnyng
Besechyng yow of yowr good supportyng.

Explicit prologus.

O Blessyd Anne aboue p*re*destinate, [fol. 222*b*]
Chose by the godhede of hys gret goodnes Tribute to St. Anne.
To be moder of that inuiolate!
Most glorious vyrgyn, grounde of mekenes,
Moder to the secund p*er*son pereles
Abydyng styll in pure virgynyte
And euer shall in p*er*petuyte!

Most dere brethern, thys day to vndyrstand,
As hit apereth by the story,
We halow and worshyp in eu*er*y land Exposition to the audience.
Of seynt Anne chefe the festfull memory,
Whyche ys departyd and ys in glory
And hath forsaken the carnall pryson
Of the body to the soule a dongeon.

Thys gloryous Anne, happy, full of grace,
Ys caryed vp most worshipfully
To the hyghest of seynts in that place

85. A parfet man which whith ou3te arte pere. 86. . . . to haue degre. 87. . . . both fer and nere. 88. For all rownd are gronddyd on the. 91. . . . hys tym mysspent. 92. . . . mak my peticyon. 93. . . . se or red. 99*a*. Explicit prologus et incipit vita b*ea*te Anne Matris Marie. 100. . . . thy gret goodnes. 107. . . . by the historye. 109. Of sent anne the festfull memorey.

With the seruyce of aungelles truly
Vnto the euerlastyng company
Of patriarks and prophets old;
She ys comyn with ioyes manyfold.

Of whom she hath takyn hyr begynnyng
And hyr flesshly habite by trewe discent
That god shuld send so by hyr forth bryngyng
Vnto hys peple—thys was the entent
Of the pure godhede sothly by assent—
By the frute of hyr wombe redempcion
And vtterly distroy discencion.

Why Holy Church worships St. Anne.

Therfore oure modyr, all holy chyrche clere,
Of thys holy matrone doth both ioy and syng,
Cardyd and holdyn vp both fer and nere
By hyr suffragys, and that in euery thyng;
Wherfore with all deuocion yeuyng
In preysyng of hyr gret laude and thanke,
Ffor of oure wele she was the verrey banke.

[fol. 223a]

She ys forsoth that blessyd hygh erthe syne
Of the whyche the heuynly potter hath made
Of the most swete shoure of hys dewe dyuyne;
The pot of oure hope whiche shall neuer fade
The son of god conceued vs to glade
In oure nature hath brought forth incarnate,
Whyche of the hygh influence was create.

She ys the goodly felde circumspect
With floures of the heuynly bames,
Of whos swetnes the verrey preelect
Diffuse odours clene withouten blames,
Hath wellyd out with hys fragraunt floures
Of lyfe by the costes so louyngly
Of all the world to comfort feythfully.

117. Unto the everlastyng lyffe trulye and companey. 141. . . . in circumspecte.
143–145. Hath wellyd oughte wit hys flagrant flouiys swete
Deffuse oper witouten blamys
Of whose swettnes the very swetnes.

And in thys felde the spouse of vyrgyns all
Hath medled hys myrre most delycious
With hys swete flauoures, whyche byn ethrall,
Hath tempred with the swetnes precious
By the infinite power glorious
Of hys most excellent diuinite
The bitternes of oure sore mortalite.

Blyssed Anne, whyche in operacion
Of oure redempcion ys gone out
Lyke as the rote hath dominacion
Of the tre and the braunches rounde about,
Of whom the heuynly rodde withouten dout
Ys comen out that most blyssyd virgyne,
Seynt mary, thys derk world to enlumyne;

St. Anne is mother of the Blessed Virgin.

Whyche, gret with chylde, hyr owne begotyn son,
The hygh almond of the most dyuyne floure
Hath brought forth to sease oure dyuysion;
Of whos swetnes dayly and euery houre
The ioyfull refeccion and sucoure
Ffedeth the aungellys in heuyn aboue
And men in erthe of verrey pure loue.

[fol. 223*b*]

Of bethlem, forsoth, that nobyll cyte
Of Dauid Anne ys gone out sycurly
And come out of the hygh rote of Iesse,
Whos blyssyd chyld, that holy seynt mary,
Cryste hath brought forth and borne most perfytely,
Whyche the captiuite had turnyd clene
Of Iacob and all comyng of hys strene;

St. Anne is of the city of David and stock of Jesse.

And also the most harde durabyll wall
Of oure old auncyen enimyte
Betwene god and man clerely ouerall;
And by the mene of hys natyuyte
God in hys manhode of hys gret pyte
Hath distroyed oonly of hys grace
And ordeynyd hath vs to hys hygh palace.

150. Wit hys swete flourys which bene eternall. 154. The bytternes. . . 168. As men . . . 170. Off Anne dauyth ys gonne ouȝte sekyrly. 177. . . auncyent divinite. 178. By god and . . . 182. . . hyȝe place.

How gloryous, how worthy and dere,
Ys thys modyr & eke how precyous
To be takyn with hyr solempne prayere,
Whyche hath brought vs a moder most famous
Of oure redempcion verrey ioyous
And in hyr includyd the testament
Of the hygh heritage by consentement;

Praise St. Anne as mother of the Blessed Virgin.

Wherfore we ought to preyse thys holy Anne,
Modyr of thys most holy virgine,
With all worshyp that may be had or canne.
And with the holy pryuylege diuine
She has begoten hyr that ys most dygne,
Wheryn she passeth other moders all—
More happyer and in especiall

Of suche a chylde to ioy the priuilege
Truly that shuld hyr owne maker begete;
And of all other, the trouthe to allege;
Therfore ioy thow and be glad in thy fete,
Thow happy modyr, before other grete
In conceuyng and bryngyng forth also
Suche oon that hath sesyd all oure wo;

[fol. 224a]

By whom the aungeles haue theyr gladnes,
And the ryght wisemen haue theyr perfyte grace,
And synners forcuer foryeuenes
By meryte of thys modyr in thys cace,
Of the modyr of cryst, owre chyef solace,
Euer styll abydyng virgyn pure and clene,
And euer shall; she ys oure parfyte mene.

The name of Anne to say hyt ys but grace;
Ffor whyche, dere brethern, ye shall vndyrstond
She ys of grace full of the hyghest place
In whom the herytage most surely doth stond
Of oure fadyr Iacob, lowsyng the bond

183. How glorious and how worthy . . . 184. . . . full precyous. 188. And in hyr meludye . . . 191. Most *is omitted*. 193. Diuine *is omitted*. 196. . . . and more in specyall. 199. . . . tyll a lege. 202. In contayning . . . 203. . . . hath I seasyd . . . 205. . . . ryȝttuouse men . . . 206. And the synnerys . . . 211. Hyt *is omitted*. 212. For why . . .

By hyr most ennobelyd magnificence,
Puttyng awey clene all vyolence.

The twelue sonnes of Iacob *very*ly
Support the ground of the fundacion
Of the holy place of Anne truly.
They lyste hit clene by hygh elacion,
The most noble regale formacion.
Ezechias and Ozias also,
Whyche byn bryght shynyng *with* other many mo

St. Anne occupies a place with Jacob and his twelve sons,

with Ezechias and Ozias,

As *pre*cious stones incomperabyll
In the felyshyp yeuyng theyr beames;
And in the hous of the modyr stabyll
Regale of god hath sent out hys stremes
With so crestyons shynyng and lemes
No tong can tell how *me*ruelously
Of the hygh influence copiously;

Among whom Iudas and Leui do shyne
Before all other there most myghtyly;
Of whom the kyngdom and presthode by lyne
Of the same pepyll ys gon out truly.
The corner stone Cryst hath bound hem surely
Togedyr as two stone walles most sure
In the blyssyd Anne, modyr clene and pure.

and with Judas and Levi.

In hyr holsom formacion only
She ys that most clere mater*al* copious
Of the hyghest beldyng to magnyfy;
Of the kynrede of whom god gloryous,
The fadyr all mighty most precyous,
Ffouchesafe to make a syngler place new;
Of the glorious modyr and vyrgyn trew;

[fol. 224*b*]

Of hys owne only begoten son dere.
Thys day, dere brethern, most specyally
In hono*ur* of thys matrone ferre and nere,
Most worshipfull and blessyd entyerly,
As we haue seyde before, now *very*ly

This is St. Anne's Day.

218. Treulye the . . . 229. *With* so crafty schenyng lemys.
233. There *is omitted.* 237. To god as . . . 248. . . fer ne nere. 249. Most blyssyd and worschipful interlye.

And in thys day togedyr we byn come
We stedefastly beleue both all and some.

Joachim is husband of Anne.

Out of thys world she ys depertyd clene;
And worthy hit ys yet neuertheles
To laude and preyse hyr housbond by som mene,
Blyssyd Ioachym, the man of nobles,
And of the most parfyte hygh holynes,
Whyche were both oon flesshe ioynyd parfytely;
Of whom procedyd euyn naturally
The most blyssyd and glorious virgyn.

Parentage of Mary.

As god wold haue hym in oure worshippyng,
Fforsoth the storyes shewyn by dyuyne
That the most clere and parfyte begynnyng
Of thys worshipfull virgyn, forth comyng
Out of the stok of Dauid, veryly
Allwey styll pure, yeuyng lyghte feythfully

Virtues of Joachim and Anne

Vnto thys derk world most prosperyously.
Hyr fadyr Ioachim neuertheles,
And Anne forsoth, hyr modyr eke truly,
Of worldly goodys lackyd none doubtles;
They were mighty and puissaunt in nobles,
Of erthely thyngs so gret influence
Passing all other ferre in excellence;

[fol. 225*a*]

But yet were they more myghty a gret dele
Of proud vertues euydently
As for theyre worldly ryches yet and wele
In the encresyng toke none hede onely.
Hyt was a thyng they set but lytell by;
But rather iustly ioyed in vertew,
Lawfully to lyue, all vice to eschew;

Ne theyre appetyte was so mykell
In the ioy of thys world to folow here,
But more a gret dele redy to fulfyll

251. . . . to god we be . . . 256. . . . the man of gret noblenes.
258. Both *is omitted.* 261. . . . in oure worschipiug to redres.
263–66 That the most clere and perfet hygh holynes
Blyssyd Joachym the man of noblenes
Which wer one fleche joned perfetlye
Com ouste of the stok of Davyd verely.
281. Nor yet per haptyte . . . 283. Redy *is omitted.*

The heuynly lustyse that bothe ferre and nere
They besyd hem where that the pepyll were
And labored bothe sore in studying
In the law of god *with*out quarellyng.

Ffor the whyche they lyued in the pepyll of god;
But moche more studiously they were;
And in theyre deuocion was to gret od,
Passing all other of that same pepyll clere;
In theyre lyuyng they were *with*outyn pere,
Whyche brought forth of theyre most noble kynrede
Most shynyng sterre cou*er*yd *with* the godhede;

Whyche of hys pyte hath brought forth a boose
Of the thorny pepyll, yet not*with*standyng
The fadyr and modyr *with*outen gloose
Of thys most holy pure virgyn beyng
Were clene *with*outen thornes hauyng;
But yet of theym byn they com rese*r*uyd,
By godds speciall grace p*reser*ued.

The iewes be lykenyd to thornes
Ffor theyre obstinate froward crokydnes;
They may be callyd thorny, well ywys.
Fforwhy? The thorne ys bareyn and fruteles;
So in theym ys nomaner of goodnes
But byn p*er*seueraunt in theyre errour,
Fforsakyng clene the heuynly socour.

The Jews likened to thorns.

Also they cam bothe verrey felolbly
All of one wyll in p*er*fyte charyte.
They were ioynyd togeder lawfully
In the nobyll cyte of galyle—
The contrey callyd ys nazareth parde—
Where Ioachim, the fadyr, was borne sure,
And Anne the modyr in Bethlem so pure.

[fol. 225*b*]

The marriage of Joachim and Anne.

And for they were bothe vnto god so iust,
And all men as well, *with*outyn fable,
Ffor in hym was theyre verrey inward trust,

They share their wealth.

284. That *is omitted.* 285. That *is omitted.* 295. . . . hath brou3th forth a rose. 302. . . we lekenyd . . . 306. . . no man of goodnes. 311. They joyned wer to god lawfullye. 315. So pure *is omitted.* 316. . . to god . . . 317. And to all men . . .

To the tempyll of god nothyng varyable
To nedy pylgryms eke bothe ferme & stable
Yeuyng two partys of theyr *pro*pre goodes
By oon assent and *with* ryght good modys;

The thryd part to theyr owne vse reser*u*yd,
Wheron they lyuyd bothe temporally
And were susteynyd and so *preser*uyd.

They are childless for twenty years.

Ffortosey bareyn they were both truly
About the seson of yeres twenti.
The tempyll of god where that they hauntyd
Deuoutly praying there god worshipped

Sertayn dayes, as they were wonyd to done,

They pray for a child and promise it to God's service.

That they myght bothe dese*r*ue and in that case
Som worthy frute to god—thys was theyr bone—
Of theyr owne flessh bryng forth *with*yn a space,
A son or a doughter onely by grace;
And whan that they had made theyr solempne avowe
There as they were in godds *ser*uice howe

What man*er* chylde soeu*er* they shuld begete
By godds yefte besechyng inwardly.
Aftyr thys Ioachym hys wo was grete,

Isacar rebukes Joachim.

Heryng the rebuke that so vnkyndely
Of Isacar, the bysshop, thretyngly
As fortosey he callyd hym bareyne:
There ys no frute brought forth betwene yow tweyne

[fol. 226*a*]

In Israell; and when he thus had seyde
Anon both sory and eke confusyd
Went forth hys wey and was euyn dismayed,

Joachim flees to his flocks.

Nat to hys howse as he somtyme vsyd
Ne to hys wyfe—he was clene abusyd—
But to hys shepards sothly he went
Tyll bettyr tydyngs to hym were sent.

An angel promises Joachim a daughter

And the pyte dyuyne dyd recomfort
Hys greuous anguysshes and hys gret peyn.
An aungell from heuyn downe to hym resort,

320. Eke *is omitted.* 328. That *is omitted.* 332. Sum worschip frute . . . 337. What man*er* of chylde they schulde beget. 339. Att thys . . . 350. Tyll bett*er* tydyng wer to hym sente. 352. Hys grevuos anguesschis . . . 353. . . . to hym dyd resorte.

Bothe syght and spekyng made hym verrey feyn,
And promysyd hym a mayden souereyn
Of hys begetyng truly to be born
To releue all that were but clene forlorn.

Sothly that a meruelous dignite
Of the chyld pronouncyd by the aungell
Shuld opynly be knowyn in all degre,
And also a meruelous clerete befell;
The aungell of lyghte sent there for to tell
To Ioachym, the fadyr, with gret lyght
The aungell dyd appere to hym in syght;

And to hym declared of that virgyne
That shuld be borne, callyd the verrey lyght,
Comyng forth of the heuynly lyght to shyne
So mickyll thys holyest virgyn bryght,
Modyr to com and chose by godds myght
To be the modyr of all holynes,
Whyche that was born sure in clene perfytenes

Of the most holy couple lawfully.
Therfore forsoth of ryght hit most nede be
That of all good the best ys she suerly;
And of all holy the holyest ys she;
Of bareyns frutefull virgynyte.
And the most habundaunt frutefulnes
Whyche shuld be born clere in parfyte goodnes,

As a good tree bryngeth forth a ioyfull floure [fol. 226b]
And of that floure a verrey frute of lyfe.
The furst were good, parfyte in euery hourer;
The secund bettyr ferre withouten stryfe
That blyssyd vyrgyn modyr, mayde, and wyfe
At the last of these best incomperabyll,
Whyche bryngyng forth was most alowabyll

That commeth of a good fadyr and modyr.
The commyng of the most blessyd virgyne
Mary ys bettyr passyng all other

who shall become mother of the Son of God.

354. . . mad hym verely to fayne. 357. . . that was clene forlorne. 361. And *is omitted.* 364. . . evyn to hym in syȝte. 375. And of all holyest . . . 379. . . frute or fleure. 384. But the last of thes both incomperable. 387. . . of that most . . .

Of whom the chylde that she brought forth most digne,
As fortosey that blessyd frute dyuyne
Of hyr wombe, ys good chyef aboue all thyng,
Ffor he was *ver*rey lord of all and kyng.

Excellence of the Blessed Virgin.

Thys holy vyrgyn of these good co*m*myng
Ys bettyr and best of all hyr kynrede,
Borne in the house of hyr fadyr beyng
And by the space of iij yere in dede
Brought forth and kept w*ith* aungells by theyr rede;
Hyt ys beleuyd theryn no dout ys;
To lytell and moche the trouth cannat mys.

Also the trouthe techyng that hyt ys thus
Known playnly by informacion
And ys proued moche truer vnto vs;
Ffor to make a trew declaracion,
Ther ys none hath suche dominacion
Insomoche ther can be nothyng so trew:
She chaunged our*e* sorowes vnto ioyes new;

Angels keep Mary.

That from the begynnyng she was kept sure
W*ith* holy aungeles allwey hourely—
Thys holyest virgyn that was so pure—
Fforsoth, for they had knowlege certeynly
Of hyr gret power to com so myghtyly;
Aftyr allmyghty god aboue all clene,
They knew she shuld of heuyn and erthe be quene.

[fol. 227*a*]

Genealogy of Anne.

Begynnyng of the holy euangell
Sheweth by tretyng aftyr mathew.
The boke of the genology doth tell
The nobyll discent; how that they came a rew
Lynyally, the playn trouthe for to shew,
Of Ihū cryst, the son of Dauid kyng,
Son of Abraham, soforth downe co*m*myng.

And so forth the *ver*rey pleyne Omely
Of dyu*er*se tretyse ys drawyn oute;
Therfor mathew eu*au*ngelist holy,

396. . . thre yere *per* being inded. 407. . . so sure. 409 thys holy . . . 418. Lenally the playne trough to schew 420. . . forsoth doune comyng.

Wrytyng the booke clerely *with*out doute,
And besyd hym to bryng hit aboute
Of Ihū crysts gen*er*acion,
Makyng pleynly the declaracion,

And callyd hym the son of these above;
By other p*ro*myssys made certeynly
Whyche was done of v*er*rey speciall love.
To these two cryst made rep*ro*myse onely
Long before thys to Abraham truly,
And seyde that all the pepyll in thy sede
Shal be blessyd on erthe *with* the godhede.

And also to dauid forsoth he seyde:
Of the frute of thy wombe shall syt on thy sete.
Abraham brought forth Isaac to eyde,
And Isaac Iacob he dyd begete;
Thys foloweth forsoth the trouth for to trete
The manhode of crysts gen*er*acion,
Whyche that he toke for oure sauac*er*on.

Mathew from the begynnyng of the promyse
That ys to Abraham, remembryng
The most noble progenitours and wyse,
Whyche lyneally procedyng doth bryng
Vnto Ioseph a v*er*rey chosyn thyng,
Housbond of the blyssyd virgyn mary,
Of whom was borne swete Ihūs sycurly.

Whoso beholdeth and redeth onely [fol. 227*b*]
The hystory pleyn of the cu*an*ngell
In crysts most noble genology
All of habundaunce renneth as a welle
Downe vnto Anne, as the story doth telle
That she shuld be a v*er*rey chosyn merke
Of lawe and grace forto fulfyll thys werke;

By whom ys seyn that the gret dygnyte
Of all mankynde in cryste shuld floryssh new;
And of hyr wombe forsoth hyt ys to se

429. Made *is omitted.* 433. And sayd all the people of thy sede,
436. . . schall be set on thy fet. 439. Thys folowed forth . . .
454. Chosyn *is omitted.*

Mary is the white cloth of Holy Church—its meaning.

She brought the floure forth; chyeff of all vertew.
Long before thys, whyche nedys most be trew,
The holygost seyde that of holy chyrche
A whyte clothe was made all oure wele to wyrche.

Ffiguryng of thys whyte cloth she hath made
Of whytenes the colour incomperable;
Hyt ys the same the whyche shall neuer fade.
The holygost spake of most laudable
That blyssyd virgyn euer veritable;
She ys the whyte clothe and syndony
That brought vnto all synners remedy

Whyche was most pure; and that she solde
And toke a gyrdyll to the Canane.
The snowy whytenes passeth manyfolde
Of thys syndony betokeneth purete;
And the virginall clennes to beholde
In the whyche the blyssyd modyr Anne
Abydyng styll whyche that she weued thanne.

The vndyrstandyng of thys Canane
Ys he that loueth wonder feruently;
So dyd the good lord in hys mageste.
She was the self and eke the same truly
That she toke to the gyrdell certeynly;
And for the gyrdyll what that hit doth mene,
Certys hyt ys the virgyne pure and clene.

[fol. 228*a*]

She was gyrdyll to the most louly lombe,
The secund persone of the trynyte,
When that he was withyn hyr blessyd wombe.
The most feythfull trew louer yet was he
That euer was; of hys gret pyte
He suffred peynes and oppression
Euyn wyllyngly for oure transgression.

When the modyr of good, blessyd mary,
That day she sprang in our nature humayne
And brought hyr forth in forme temporally

459. Chyeff *is omitted.* 460. . . . which must neds . . . 470. Which þat . . . 476. . . . with þat sche . . . 480. He wase the selffe and eke the sonn truly. 482. That *is omitted.* 484. Sche was gyrdyll to the most holy love. 487. . . . wase sche.

Out of the palace of hyr wombe certayne
To the redempcion of mankynde playne
Whyche she solde to god, the fadyr aboue,
And in that virgyn was nothyng but loue.

Hyt well appereth the son incarnate
Of the fadyr all myghty made shuld be;
Pryce of the modyr clene *im*maculate
And that *p*recious virgyn mary fre
Shuld appere to those in captyuyte
Clene to delyu*er* hem out of thraldom
By hyr gret goodnes and blyssyd wisdom.

Whereof the holy aungell from god was sent
To show vnto the fadyr and modyr
Of thys most holy vyrgyn the entent
That shuld be borne excedyng fer all other,
Of oure feythe to be the guyde and rother,
Shewyng to hem hyr name and eke hyr lyfe;
Hyr comyng pleyne to seasyng of all stryfe

Gabriel greets Mary.

Also pronounced hyr in the tyme co*m*myng
The modyr of the son of god to be;
To whom the gret aungell seyde accordyng,
Gabraell, when he gret hyr on hys kne,
When she was come to full age in the gre
Of maryage spousyd certeynly
To holy Ioseph, but nat carnally

[fol. 228*b*]

Ne coupled by carnall affeccion—
The conneccion was v*er*rey heuynly—
The godhede toke holely direccion;
Natw*ith*standyng hit was lawfully
Aftyr the course and forme vsually,
There was no sensuall part that greued;
Hyt was all godly and so hyt preued.

The heavenly marriage of Joseph and Mary.

Sothely aftyr thys salutacion
Holy and worthy sent fro the hyghest
To suche a virgyne of p*ro*bacion,

497. As in þat bargayne wase . . . 516. . . . to fulfill the . . .
522. . . wase dunne lawfully. 525. Godly *is omitted.*

Excedyng all other both most and lest,
She was the verrey modyr of behest
To thys world that hath brought feythfully
The tresure of oure fynaunce fynally;

Mary was predestined to be the world's comfort.

She was the vessell of eleccion
Chosyn by the deyte gloryous
To bere hym that shuld make redempcion
Ffor all mankynde, shent and dolorous.
The aungell seyde to hyr gracious:
The holyest that euyr was or shal be;
Thow blessyd virgyn, shal be borne of the;

He shalbe called verrey godds son.
She was kept therfor most souerenly
In kepyng of aungells that seson;
They wallyd hyr clene round about surely.
Suche obseruaunce they dyd, and gret cause why:
They knew ryght well she shuld bryng forth the kyng
Of aungellys passyng all erthely thyng;

And a gret whyle before that she was borne
Hyr name was knowyn, hyr lyfe and dignite,
To bere hym that shuld were the crowne of thorne;
Preuyded by the blessyd trynyte,
She was predestinat, and none but she,
To be the worlds verrey chief comfort
By hym that shuld out of hyr wombe resort.

[fol. 229a]

But vnto thys maner of kepyng most sure,
That ys fortosey heuynly and aungelike,
Was gret in the fadyrs hous and pure;
But more excedyng ferre and autentyke
In the holy houshold of god nat lyke;
Whyche for to speke of ys incomperable,
No tong can tell how delectable.

Mary dedicated to God.

Of whom forsoth she was offryd vp pleyn;
In the temple bothe fadyr and modyr
To god presentyd hyr there both tweyn;

537. . . to hyr glorious. 543. Round *is omitted.* 552. Verrey *is omitted.* 555. That ys to say . . .

And he receuyd hyr and none othyr,
Whyche passeth before all the other;
Natwithstandyng the other was ryght good,
Thys ys verre bettyr, whoso vndyrstood.

God that hath takyn hyr to hym self truly,
He hath kept hyr of hys inly goodnes;
By hys holy aungelys besyly
He hath preseruyd hyr full of mekenes
Euyn as hys owne sanctuary pereles
Hys owne dere son whyche was most pure and clene
Of god and men to be the verrey mene.

When the fulnes of tyme and the seson
Preuentyd before by tyme prefynyte,
God sent hys son whyche passyth all reson,
Made of a woman without lawe to quyte
And theym redeme that lost were by delyte,
By the lawe ageyne that were oppressyd
Lowsyng theyr bonds that had transgressyd.

Also thys mayden of god thus elect
And preelect abode and dwellyd styll
In the temple of god to hyr most dilect;
And she also set holyly all hyr wyll
The plesure of god onely to fulfyll,
The woshipfull tempyll of god to preyse,
In that she myght the honour for to reyse.

Her manner of life.

That with hyr worthiest most precious
Parfyte feyre speche inly delectable,
Holy, blessyd, and eke mellyflous;
That she myght therto be ryght acceptable;
That he that strong kyng Dauid & stable
Of the rote of whom she ys descendyd,
As the trouthe before ys comprehendyd;

[fol. 229b]

Hyt is red in the psalme of Dauid pleyn;
Thow, good lord, part of myne enherytaunce.
Fforsoth forsaken was she now certeyn

566. . . the toder . . . 567. Thys ys fer better who hyt understod. 569. . . . hys only goodnes. 573. Most *is omitted.* 582. Thus *is omitted.* 584. To hyr *is omitted.* 590. Feyre *is omitted.* 593. That strong kyng . . . 594. Of the lyne of whome . . .

Of fadyr and modyr clerely in substaunce
And there betakyn to godds vsaunce,
Co*mm*ytted to hym truly for to plese
And the old sorowes sothly to appese.

And how she lyuyd from that tyme forth
Or how in the tempyll she behad hyr,
Hyt ys nat possyble to sey forsoth
To any man that euer was nygh or fer.
To thynke or devyne all but veyne hyt were;
Hyt passeth to fer all mannys reson;
No tong can tell how she dyd that seson.

And all feyre speche that can be thought truly
Shall fayle; hit hys in co*mpre*hensible;
And all the coniecturyng eke sothely
Vanyssheth and ys clere impossible,
To mannys reson clene insensible,
Ffrom the face of hyr super*h*abundaunt
Ver*t*ues innume*r*able extendaunt.

Of thys virgyns most excellent grace
In the conspect of the hygh mageste,
Of hym whyche chase hyr for hys restyng place
Preuuydyd by the parfyte Trinite;
The mayde, the lyfe, the tyme when hit shuld be;
Wherfore to yeue hyr dew laude and preysyng
Accordyngly hit passeth all connyng.

[fol. 230*a*]

Joachim and Anne apostrophised.

O happy Ioachim, therfor ioy thow
And be glad that thus hast dese*r*ued
To be callyd the ver*r*ey fadyr now
Of suche a chylde; ioy thow thus p*reser*ued.
But thow, Anne, that art also reser*u*ed
Ioye now togedyr long tyme happyer
Then Anne the modyr of Samuel fer.

Thou hast brought forth the heuynly myrro*ur* chyeff
And the parfyte lyly of chastyte,
The ground and mene of all oure bonechyeff;

601. Conv*er*ted to hym . . .
612. Eke sothely *is omitted.*
618. . . . in ev*er*y place.

The houshold of clennes and honeste ;
The lanterne of lyght and welle of pyte ;
The consolacion of all wrechys
And of all trew pepyll the hope of blys ;

Quene of aungellys ; fountayn of *mer*cy ; A prayer to the Virgin.
Mediatione of thy ineffable grace,
Whyche to all synn*er*s are euyr redy
To helpe and comfort in eu*er*y space ;
And to vs all worshippyng in what place
Of thys same day the gret solempnyte
She bryngeth grace of hyr benygnyte.

Lady of the world, make vs glad *with* the,
And *wit* cryste Ihū oure lord, thyn owne son,
In eu*er*lastyng ioy, for thow art v*er*rey she,
The blessyd modyr of redempcion.
Bryng vs vnto thy sonnys hygh mansion,
To whom be parfyte honour and glory
By all the worldes now infinitely. ℟

Now blessyd seynt Anne, of thy gret goodnes A prayer to St. Anne.
With my trew hert I mekely beseche the
Here my prayer and do thy besynes :
Be mene for vs all *with* thy doughtres thre
To that most holy blyssyd Trynyte
Of hys gret m*er*cy that we may be hys,
And when we dy to haue eternall blys. Amen.
Explicat vita stē Anne matris s*anc*te marie virg*in*is.

642. . . worschiping and solace. lyff of Seynt Anne.

Colophon : Here endyth the

III

The Life of St. Anne

MS. Bodl. 10234
(Tanner 407).

[fol. 21*a*]

Listen to the story of St. Anne, her husbands, and her daughters.

Souereynys and serys 3yf it be 3our wylle
To here and to lere of thyng that is good
ffro tryflys and talys kepe 3our tonggs stylle
and here 3o this matere with a mylde mood

ffor 3o schull here þe story þat is of seynt anne
the modyr of oure lady blyssyd mote sche bene
and of þe housbondes that sche had man aftyr manne
and of here dere dowterys and here chylderyn bedene

Joachim and Anne are childless twenty years.

Sent anne had a housbonde joachym was hys name
þe fyrst housbond that sche had þe soth for to telle
a ffeythfull man he was. and had a nobyll name
that meche cowde of curteseye and of good councelle

They weren ryght ryche folke. and therto meke and myld
and in lawe of oure lord. both þey led here lyff
but xx^ti^ yeer togedyr. cam of hem noon chyld
of thys man joachym. and anne that was hys wyff

I give herewith the results of a collation of the poem on the life of St. Anne contained in MS. Harley 4012 with that contained in MS. Bodl. 10234 (Tanner 407). I have not undertaken to give variant spellings; but I have endeavoured to give all the variant readings of MS. Harley 4012.

Title: Here begynnyt þe lif of Sent Anne.

1. Soueraignes & frendes . . . 3. Ffor trifelles . . . 5. Ye shall here þe storie of blessid Sent Anne. 6. . . . worship mote she bene. 7. And all hir husbondis. 10. . . . þe truþe for to tell. 11. . . nobill fame. 12. . . sad counsell. 13. þei were riche folke . . . 14. In þe law of *our* lorde þei led *þer* lif. 15. . . came þer ne childe. 16. Of þe man Joachym.

A greet desyre þey had a chyld that þey myght haue
and ther of they preyd god. in al that they myght
and thys a wow þey mad. war it mayde or knave
þat it schuld servyn god be day and be nyght

They pray for a child and Mary is born.

So it befel as god wold *with*inne a schort space
þey had a chyld togedyr mari was her name
þat was weddyd aftyrward thro*ur* godds grace
to joseph a gentylman of name and of fame.

Mary is wedded to Joseph.

And qwow þis maryage was mad of josep and mari
ȝo schul here aftyrward reed in ryme.
but fyrst j wyl tell ȝow a nother story.
of anne and her housbonds in þe mene tyme.

Joachym þe gentylman þat was our*e* ladyes fadyr
hym fel for to deyd as godds wylle was
and aftyr hem sent anne þat was our*e* ladyis mod*yr*
toke anothyr housbond hys name was Cleophas

[fol. 21*b*]

Joachim dies and Anne marries Cleophas.

And they haddyn a dowtyr getyn of hem betwene
and she was clepyd mary. as þe boke sayes
that aftyrward was weddyd *with* wurchepe as j wene
to on that hythe Alpheus levyng in tho dayes

Their daughter is Mary, wife of Alpheus and mother of James, Joseph, Simon, and Jude.

This mary had *with* Alpheus þat was her housbonde
fowyr fayer chylderyn as wretyn is *with* penne
jamys and josep þe just man. as j vndyrstonde
symond and jude. all foure holy menne

Aftyr hem sent Anne. had the thredde man
his name as men seyn was salome.
and vndyr hem bothe. haddyn a woman
that was clepyd mary ful fayr and ful fre.

St. Anne's third husband is Salome. Their daughter is Mary, wife of Zebedee and mother of James and John.

17. And grete desire . . . 18. In *þat* þei praide too god *þat* þei myght. 19. . . boye or knaue. 20. *þat hit* shulde euermore serue god bo*þe* day and nyght. 21. So hit fell *þat* after in a short space. 23–24. *omitted.* 25. And how *þat* þe maryage . . . 30. Hym fellid for to dy . . . 31. And afterward Sent Anne . . . 33. And þei to had a doghter yofen þem betwene. 34. She was kallid mary . . . 37. This mary had by Alpheus . . . 38. iiij faire children as writen was *wit* penne. 40. . . and all iij . . . 41. After þis Sent Anne had þe iij*de* manne . . . 42. . . was klepid Salomon*e*. 43. . . þei had a Woman.

And thys mary was weddyd to on ȝebede.
that in þe lawe of god had gret loue and lyst.
and they to haddyn to chyldryn blyssid mote þei be.
Sent jamys þe more. and john þe wangelyst.

St. Anne had three husbands and three daughters named Mary.

And thus oure ladyis moder þat hyght sent Anne.
three housbonds she had jche after othyr.
and with jche a mayde chyld þis is soth sertayne
and alle three weren maryis born of on modyr.

Now blyssyd be sent anne þat brouth forth þis berth
and blyssid be these dowterys and her chylderyn infere
and blyssed be alle tho þat make onest merth
in þe worchepe of sent anne in thys tyme of ȝeere.

[fol. 22*a*]

St. Anne's father, mother, and sister.

Summe wyll askyn of sent anne who was her ffadyr
and j sey his name was kyng jsacar.
and summe wyl aske who was her modyr
and j sey naȝaphat and gentyll folk þey war.

And sent anne had a sostyr þat hyght jsmary.
that bar Elyȝabeth þe modyr of jon baptyst.
and here men mowen se and knowe kyndely.
qwow syb jon was on to ihū cryst.

The history of Joachim and Anne.

Now wyl j turne aȝen and telle ȝou som what ellys.
of joachym and Anne. of whom j spak aforen.
and of maydyn mari as þe story tellys.
and somwhat of her levyng & who þat sche was boren

SEynt jerom þe holy man and þe holy doctour
hath wretyn in hys boke and beryth wytnesse
that joachym was borne wyth gret honour
in þe Cete of naȝareth that wurchepful is.

45. þis mary was mared to one ȝebede. 48. . . . John of vangeliste. 49. And þis our ladis moder . . . 50. . . . eche one after oþer. 51. And wit eche one a maide chulde þis is sartayne. 53. Now *is omitted*. 56. In worship of Sent Anne in any tyme of ȝer. 58. I say his name was Sent Isakar. 59. . . . will aske also . . . 60. And I say þat Masaphat . . . 61. And *is omitted*. 63. And *is omitted*. 64. How sib þat Iohn was vnto Ihū Criste. 65. What *is omitted*. 66. . . . as I spake before. 68. And *is omitted* . . . wher she was borne. 69. Sent Jerom was an holi man and a doctour. 71. . . . and had grete honour.

And Anne was borne in a toun besyde jerslem.
of the kynred of kynges and of kynggs blode
þe name of that Cete is clepyd bethleem
in þe whyche crist was born þat deyed on þe rode.

And also befel as god wold þat joachym and anne.
were weddyd togedyr 3erys and dayes.
trewe folk and lawefull to euery manner manne.
and kept well godds lawe as the boke sayes.

And they haddyn werdely ryches ful gret plente
but þat ryches they partyd on three maner wyse
on parte they 3ouyn to god. with herte good and fre
to the meyntonawnse of holy chyrche and godds servyse.

Pore folk haddyn þe secunde part 3ouyn of almes. [fol. 22b]
fulfyllyng þe vij dedys þat ben of mercy.
but many folk on days wyl not do þes
that han welth and weelfare ful plentewously.

And the thred part þei kept for her owyn fode
to hem and to here serwantys in honest degre.
and thus schuld euery man that hath mekyl goode
be þe wyl of god dapart his good in three.

Twenty 3eer togedyr had þey no chyld. They pray for a child.
and ofte þei mad a wow as j sayd beforne
3yf þei myght haue a chyld it schuld be kept vnfyld.
and put to goddys servyse aftyr it were borne.

So it befel on a tyme as þe lawe wold Joachim is reproved by the priest because he is childless.
joachym went to cherche to make his offeryng.
on a pryncipall day as other men schuld
be þe lawe of oure lord and be hys byddyng.

73–76. Anne was borne in a towne beside Jerusalem
þe name of þe cite is kallid bedlem
In whiche criste was borne þat died for vs on rode
Mankinde to redeme with his precius blode.

77. And so befelle þat Joachym and Anne. 80. And kept goddes lawes as þe boke tell saies. 81. And þei had of riches grete plente. 83. . . gaue god wit per hert fre. 84. To maintayne holy cherche. 85. þe ijde parte pore folk had in almus. 86. þat ben *is omitted*. 87. þat many folke now a day loue not to do þus. 88. þat haueth welth and welfare plenteusly. 91. So shuld euery man doo þat hath moche goode. 92. . . departe þem on iij^e^. 95. If þei myght haue had one he shulde be kept unsilde. 96. And put in goddis seruice . . .

So joachym on a day to þe offeryng he ȝede
and his frendys infere to þe prest of þe lawe.
and whan he cam beforne þe prest and schuld do þat dede
þe prest reprevyd hym and thys was hys sawe. 104

Thow art nouth worthy joachym offeryng to make.
for þu hast non frute getyn of þin wombe
and þerfor þe and thyn offryng bothe j here forsake
and joachym stode astonyid as styll as a lombe. 108

Ffor thys was þe lawe þat in that tyme was.
that what man it were þat myght noon chyld geete.
to þe awter of gold he schuld nouth vp pas 111
ne with hem þat haddyn chylderyn he schuld nouth be seete.

[fol. 23a] And for that joachym had noon chyld thus was he chyd.
and for schame of hem self he would nouth be sene
but went to hys herdmen and there he hym hyd
and meche mornyng forsothe had as j wene. 116

Joachim flees to his herdsmen.

An angel appears to Joachim, explains why some couples are childless, and promises him a daughter, Mary.

But god of his goodnesse whan þat he saw his tyme.
an anngel of heuene he sent to joachym.
as ȝe schall here aftyrward red in ryme.
þe weche holy anngell on thys wyse seyd to hym. 120

I am an anngell of heuene sent to the.
to telle þe goode tydynggs joachym be thyn name
god hath herd thyn preyowrys þat settyth in trinite
and whow þu wer reprevyd and nouth wer to blame 124

Ffor in þat that þu hast noon with thyn wyff
thus many dayes and ȝerys it is goddys wylle
for god wyl be lord of alle þat beryth lyff
and namely of mankynde and that is þe skylle. 128

101. . . to þe cherch yode. 103. And when he kam wher þat he shuld do þe dede. 107. þerfor þe and þi offering I vtterly boþe forsake. 108. þen Ioachym stode still as a lambe. 109. Ffor þis þe law in þat tyme was. 110. þat what man þat kowde no childe get. 111. . . auter of god . . . 112. . . for to be set. 113. Ffor cause he had no childe þus was he chid. 116. And made moche mornyng forsoþe as I wene. 117. . . mercy . . . 119. . . after in þis ryme. 120. Whiche angell þus wise saide vnto hym. 121. . . angell of god sent vnto the. 122. þe *is omitted.* 123. God hath herde þi praier sitting in trinyte. 124. . . wer not . . . 125. Ffor þat þu haste no childe wit þi wif. 127. Ffor he wil . . . 128. . . which is good skill.

Ffor many men and women that han fleysshely lust
they wene to han chylderyn at her owyn lykyng
but the maker of mankende that gentyl is and just
wyl be mayster as j wene of here werkyng. 132

Ffor ȝif they haddyn chylderyn at her owyn desyre
they wold wenyn it were of her owyn myght
but god that is her souereyn wyl be lord and syre 135
and putte hem from her purpose as resoun wyll and ryght

And thus they may wel wete withowten ony fayle
that they may gete noon chyld with flexly lust only
for all her lust and lykyng ful lytel schal awayle
but god wyl help toward of hys gret mercy. 140

And many folk han no chyld for a nother skyl [fol. 23b]
for they wold perau(e)nter loue the chylde to meche
and mayntene it in shrewednes aȝens godds wyl
þerfore they han no chylderyn as j trowe trewlyche. 144

And of a long tyme som folk no chyld may haue
vnto tyme that þey come to gret age.
as Abraham and sarra þat brouth forth a knave
ysayas þe prophete a sad man and a sage. 148

And ysayas and rebecca þat olde folk warne
and baran and baren. be þe cours of kynde
in her elde age þey had a fayr barne
josep þat was a lord in egypt as j fynde 152

Who was strenger in his dayes than was sampson
who was mor holy þan was samuel.
mor strenger and more holy in that tyme was non.
of baren women bothe wern born as oure bokys tel. 156

129. Ffor *is omitted* . . . which haþe . . . 131. And be maker of mankinde which is luge full iuste. 132. Wil be master in all *þer* warkinge. 133. Ffor *is omitted.* 134. . . hit wer *þer* awne myght. 135. Her *and* wil be *are omitted.* 136. . . as is most right. 137. And *is omitted.* 138. þat þei may haue no childrene of *þer* luste only. 139. . . shall preuaile. 140. But if god will help of his grete mercy. 141. Many folk haue no childerne . . . 143. . . as hit is goddis will. 145. And *þer*for haue thei none *þis* god for þem will wirche. 146. In to þe tyme þei be of grete age. 148. . . a wise man . . . 151. In *þer* wolde daies þei had a faire baron. 152. þat *is omitted.* 153. . . þen euer was samsoun. 154. And more holier þen euer Samuell. 155. So stronge and holy . . . 156. Of baren women borne boþe as I finde here tell.

And also we fyndyn wel of john þe baptyst.
þat his fader and his moder wern of gret elde
for oure lord may werke ryght as hym self lyst.
and at his owen wylle al thyng may he welde

Ffor thow þat þei ben weddyd in trewe wedlak
and on to long tyme no chyld mowen haue
þat schal ben a good chyld *with*owtyn gret lak
as many men seyn be it mayden or knaue.

And therfor joachym j do the to wetyn.
þat þu schal haue a chyld *with*inne fewe dayes.
trowe thys tale trewly thow it be not wretyn.
for god that is almyghty on to þe *þis* he sayes.

[fol. 24a] And thereto he sayes mor thy wyff is with chyld
on wetyng thy self and her self also
þer was neu*er* chyld *þat* neu*er* was so myld
ne neu*er* schal be brouth forth of to.

And it schal be a mayde chyld and be clepyd mary.
the worthyest woman of alle that may ben borne.
and thys may be prevyd be p*r*ofecy
of *3our* owen p*r*ophetys þat wern her beforne

Ffor sche schal conceyve thurgh g*r*ace of þe holy gost
goddys sone of heuene and bere hym bodely
and a modyr and a mayden be clepyd in eu*er*y cost.
and schal be a mervely to many man suerly

The angel bids Joachim return home. And therfor joachym j bydde þe *þat* þu hom wynde
to þi wyff thyn frendys and þi meyne.
for thyn houswyff at home þat onest is and hende
makyth myche mornyng for love of the.

157. Wel *is omitted.* 158. . . boþe wer wolde. 159. . . like as hym liste. 160. At his awne will al þinge is made as hit shulde. 161. Ffor þey þat be weddid in true wedlak. 162. And so longe tyme and no childe haue. 163. Gret *is omitted.* 164. As many men be o*þer* childe or knaue. 167. Trust my tale true . . . 168. . . . on *þis* wise saes. 169. Mor *is omitted.* 170. Vnweting to hir and to þe alsoo. 171. . . þat eu*er* was so mylde. 173. Hit shal be a maiden childe and named mary. 174. . . þat euer myght . . . 175. This may welbe proued by þe prophecy. 176. Of wolde prophitis . . . 177. . . by þe holi goste. 179. To be callid maiden and moder in euer moste. 180. And *þis* shalbe a maruaile to many a man truly. 181. . . loke þat home wende. 182. As I have Saide so shall h*it* be. 183. At home *is omitted.* 184. . . for þe loue of þe.

And j telle þe a tokene þat thow schal fynde trewe.
þu schal mete with thyn wyff at þe goldyng gate
do as j þe rede it schal þe neuer rewe
and joachym went his way meryly god wate

And aftyrward þe anngel went to sent Anne. The angel comforts St. Anne.
and bad her be of good cher al schuld be wel.
and told her of here housbonde & wher he was sertayne
and al that he had told hym tol her euery del.

And bad her gon a good pas to þe gate of gold
for ther sche schuld mete hym withowtyn ony fayl.
and a non sent anne walk forth sche wold
She mad noon maner tarying in that travayl.

And at þe goldyn ȝate mette they togedyr [fol. 24b]
and eyther kyssyd other and were ful blythe Joachim and Anne meet at the golden gate.
and alle there goode frendys þat komyn with hem thedyr
welkomyd hom joachym many fele sythe

Ther was made meche merthe of lest and of most
of alle maner pepyl as oure bokys tel
for þei were loved in euery contre and cost
jn þat land þat þei dwellyd in. was clepyd jsrael.

As they went homward þey spak of þe anngel
and what he spak to hem eyther to other gan rehers
and bothe alwayis in euery speche and spel
they foundyn hym trewe in euery word and vers

And þan they thankynd god of his gret grace They thank God.
and of his gret goodnes and his gracyous sonde.
and bothe knelyd doun in that same place.
and worchepe dede to god with mowth hert and honde.

185. I shall tell . . . 187. Do as I þe counsaill and þu shalt hit not rue. 188. Ioachym went his way full mery . . . 189. And after þat & þe angell went to Sent Anne playne. 190. And albe of good chere for all shalbe welle. 192. And all þat he tolde hym was founde true euery dele. 193. . . go apas . . . 194. Ffor þer shulde she mete hym witouten faile. 195. . . walkyng forþe . . . 196. She made no taryng . . . 197. And *is omitted*. 198. . . boþe were full bliþe. 199. . . frindes kamme wit Anne þether. 200. To welcom Ioachym . . . 201. . . and moste. 203. . . were well loued . . . 204. þe lande where þei dwellid was callid Israell. 205. And as . . . 206. And what he tolde þem boþe ganne rehers. 207–208 *omitted*. 209. And thankid . . . 210. . . his goodnes and gracius sonde. 212. And worship to god . . .

Mary is born.

After þat whan tyme kome anne bar her chyld
that was clepyd mary as j seyd beforne
a freyssh fode and a fayer with foly neuer fyld
aftyr þe tyme that sche was of her modyr borne

Mary is taken to the temple and dedicated to God.

After þat this chyld was thre 3er of age
it was wenyd as j wene fro þe sokyng.
and aftyr comon custom and olde vsage
þey went with þis chyld and mad her offryng.

On to þe grete temple of jerusalem
þat semely is set on hey as j wene
and as men seyn þat han sen hem.
ther be pasys vpward no lesse þan xv^ne^.

[fol. 25a]

And tho be mad as men sayn al of marbyl stone
be þe weche pylgrymys and other men pas.
and there þis chyld mary ful lythly a lone
went vp at these pasys as 3ong as sche was.

And alle folk wern ameruelyd þat seyn þat selkowth syth
þat sweche a 3ong chyld myght gon swyche a pase.
ant euery man blyssyd her. her bewte was so bryth
fayer of feture and of face and ful of goddys grace.

Joachym and Anne þei left her stylle there.
in þe forsayd temple as pei mad her a wow
þat sche schuld serue god whan þat tyme were.
and so sche dede dewoutely j schall telle 3ou qwow.

She and other chylderyn þat mayden chylderyn wern
wern take in to þe temple vnto a sertayn age.
in that place to abyden and her lawes to lern
and so be kept in clennesse fro sythys owtrage.

213. . . þis childe. 216. After tyme . . . was ofter . . . 218. . . . for þe sokyng. 219. After comen custome and hir wolde vsage. 220. . . . be childe and made offeringe.
221–224. Vnto þe Tempull of Jerusalem
þat semly is set on his ass as I wene (*sic*)
And as many men saith þat haþe sene þem
þer be paises vpward moo þen xv.
226. By which . . . 227. . . . full ofte alone. 228. . . . all þees gresing . . . 229. All folke meruelid þat saw that sight. 232. And faire of fface and fete was of goddes grace. 233. Joachym and Anne left hir þer behinde. 234. . . . þer avoy. 235. . . . what tyme. 236. . . . did she deuotely and . . . 238. Were take to . . . 239. . . . to abide and þer . . . 240. . . . from Synne and outerage.

Mary in the temple.

And this was þe ryght rewle þat oure lady kept
for as a wyse woman her wyl was to werk.
qwan tyme was sche wakyd qwan tyme was sche slept
but eue*r*y day be þe morwyn sche went to þe kyrk. 244

And ther sche made her preyours tyl forforth dayes
and aftyrward she went vnto wevyng werk
and at aftyr noone sche ȝede aȝen as þe boke sayes.
to her preyers and her bedys tyl it was derk. 248

And eue*r*y day an anngel peryd to her.
comfortyd her and brouth her of anngelys fode.
and ther with sche was feed sche wold take no nother
for sche wold no werdely mete were it neue*r* so goode. 252

[f. 1. 25*b*]

And þow eue*r*y day sche had mete and drynk
of þe bysshopys of þe lawe as þe lawe wold
and her felawys also for þei schuld nouth sqwynk.
but to godds servyse and þe*r*to they wern bold. 256

But al þe mete þat sche toke of þe byschopis
she departyd it ful preuyly among pore men
sche ȝaf hem her drynkyn to puttyn in her cuppys
to drynkyn when þei woldyn & namely to women. 260

And many dyue*r*s tymes as þe boke tellys.
many man and woman seyn w*ith*owtyn dowte
qwat comfort sche had of holy anngellys
and whan þey spokyn to her ful lowe gon þey lowte. 264

And qwat man it were þat had a sekenesse
ȝif sche myghte towche hym he schuld be hool anoon.
and this was throw þe myght of her holynesse.
now blyssyd be this lady there sche sytts in troon. 268

241. And *is omitted.* 244. Eche daie in the mornyng . . . 246. And after she went to þe . . . 247. After none agayne . . . 248. . . and bedis till þat hit . . . 250. Hir comforting . . . angell fode. 251. þe*r*wit was she fed she wolde haue none o*þe*r. 252. For *is omitted.* 253. Neuerþeles . . . 255. . . for cause þei shuld . . . 256. In godd*e*s serues and þe*r*in wer þei bolde. 257. . . of þe same . . . 259. . . and put hit in *per* cuppis. 266. . . hym toche he was . . . 267. And þat was because of hir grete holines. 268. . . þat sittithe . . .

And nowth *with*stondyng *þat* sche was þe fayrest woman
of alle *þat* eue*r* wern born. na for *þat* clerkys say.
3if a man had lokyd on her *þat* had be temptyd *þan*.
to þe synne of lechery anoon it went a way.

It was gret merueyl *þat* mary myght do thus.
for sche was ful of grace *with*owtyn ony drede
now mary and sent Anne. we p*ray* 3ou prey 3e for vs
þat god 3if vs grace wel for to spede. Amen.

Mary refuses to marry.

Bvt what tyme oure lady and other maydenys mo
wer come to her ful age of fourtene 3ere
as the lawe wold þe bysshopys bad hem go.
to be maryed to men and dwellyn no lenger there

[fol. 26*a*]

And alle these maydenys wenten as the bysshepys hem bad
hom to her frendys save mary alone
and sche sayd sertayne a gret cause sche had.
and therfor from the temple on no wyse wold sche gone.

They askyd. her þe cause and þe skyl qwy.
that sche wold noth do as other maydenys deed.
and sche answeryd agen and seyde sekyrly
for too causis and skyllys *þat* myght nouth be heed.

Ffor my fadyr and myn modyr maden this a wow
þat j schuld serue god in þe terme of myn lyf
and j haue mad a wowe to kepe me chast 3if j mow.
serys answere to resou*n* and let vs nouth stryff.

The bysshopys wern astonyed and stoden ston stylle
þey cowde nouth answere to her be ony resou*n*
for bothe þe old lawe and þe newe on this wyse wylle
þat a good wow be kept *with* a good deuocion.

269. Not*with*stonding she was þe ferist woman. 270. *þat* euer were borne 3it as clerk*es* say. 271. If a man were temptid when he saw hir þan. 272. To *is omitted.* 273. Hit was no grete . . . 274. . . ane drede þen. 275. . . praie 3e boþe for vs. 276. . . will sende vs . . . to . . . 278. . . to full age of xiij yere. 281. All þe . . . hem bade. 284. She saide for sartayne . . . 287. þen she aunswerid and saide . . . 288. Ffor þe causis and skill *þat* may not be hid. 289. For *is omitted.* 290. . . shall se*r*ue god the terme . . . 291. þe same wow haue I made to kepe if I mow. 294. . . bi noo reson. 295. Boþe wold law . . . 296. . . *with* good . .

Thus what for þe wow þat oure lady mad
and what for þe custom *þat* nedys must be kept.
þe bysshopys of þe lawe wer no thyng glad
and therfor a councell to gedyr they kept.

The bishops call a council.

Of all þe wysest men *þat* weren in þat lond
to wete what were best in thys forsayd cas.
and alle they seyden infere it were good to fond
3yf good god wold helpyn hem of hys gret gras.

Than þese bysshopys and these men be a comyn assent
eue*r*y man preyd to god on his best wyse
þat su*mm*e trewe tokyn among hem myght be sent
er thanne þei fro ther preyers vp schuld ryse.

And so they loyn in her preyers þe mo*un*tennan*s* of a myle [fol. 26*b*]
and anon þey herdyn a voys among hem alle
þat bad hem bydde her bedys for w*ith*in a lytel whyle
þei schuld se with owten fayle qwat thyng schuld falle

An angel tells how Mary's husband to be chosen.

And than seyd þe anngel þat alle men myght heren
almyghty god byddyth 3ou & chargyth 3ow þe*r*wyth
þat alle men old and 3ong in thys place aperen
that be nought weddyd and dwellyn w*ith* king dauyd

And that eue*r*y man schal bere in his hond a long 3erd & a drye
in his hond opynly *þat* alle men mown it sene.
for that man schal be weddyd to maydyn marye.
qwose 3erd may florych w*ith* levys that ben grene.

And on þe same 3erde þe holy gost schal lyght.
in þe lyknesse of a dowe þat alle men mowe se.
and so schuln 3o knowe be that semely syth
to qwom maydyn mary weddyd schal be

297. *þis* was for þe wow . . . 298. Which for nedes . . . 301. . . . wisemen . . . 303. . . saide infere it good were for to . . . 304. If god will help þem . . . 305. þat þes bisshoppis by a . . . 306. . . praide god in his . . . 308. Or þei from *þer* praier shulde . . . 309. . . laye in praiere . . . 311. . . and w*ith*in a while. 312. . . wolde befall. 313. þen saide an angell . . . 314. . . chargi*þe* *þerwit*. 315. þat eue*r*y man . . . which . . . þere. 316. þat þei be not . . . 317. . . shal haue a longe rod . . . 318. . . may sene. 319. For *is omitted*. 320. þat his rodd florish w*it* leuys grene. 321. . . rodd . . . 324. . . mared . . .

The men assemble in the temple with their rods.

And þan was it comanndit be a comoun cry.
þat þo that were nouth weddyd were þei old or 3yng.
fro þe most to þe lest saf chylderyn only
þat were dwellyng in court with dauyd þe kyng.

Joseph has no rod.

That euery man schuld haue a long 3erd in his hond
and in þe gret temple stonde al to gedyr
and thys was don in dede as j vndirstond
but josep browt no 3erd whan he cam thedyr.

Ffor josep was a febyl man and of gret age.
for hym to be weddyd he had non gret wylle
and therfor þat he schuld make no maryage
the 3erd þat he schuld bere at hom he left it stylle

[fol. 27a]

No token is shown.

So whan this men wern gaderyd and togedyr stode
and euery man saf on. held vp his rod
ther was no tokene schowyd badde no goode
and the pepyl knelyd doun and preyid to good god.

That wolde schowe and telle of his mercy
qwy and wherfore they myght no tokene sene.
and they weren answeryd agen fayr and onestly
and these wern þe werds for sothe as j wene.

Euery man hath browt a 3erd saue only þat man
þe weche schal be weddyd to maydyn mary
and therfor loke abowte as wel as 3e can
3if there be ony swych in þis company.

Joseph is sent home for his rod.

Than þey sowte and foundyn non but on
þat left his rod behyndyn hym josep be his name
and þan þe bysshopes bad hym þat hom schuld he gon
and bryng a 3erd with hym or ellys he schuld bere blame.

325. And *is omitted.* 326. All þo . . . 327. Ffrom be more . . . 329. . . rod . . . 330. . . to stande . . . 332. . . no rodde when þat . . . 333. Ffor he was . . . 334. Ffor to be weddid he had no grete wille. 336. . . he lefte still. 337. So when all þe men togider þat they stode. 339. . . neþer bad nor goode. 340. þen . . . praid vnto god. 341. þat he wolde shew and tell þem of his mercy. 343. And þei wer aunswerid agayne honestly. 345. . . a rod saue þat man. 346. Which shalbe . . . 348. . . any suche here in þis company. 349. þen þe sowght aboute . . . 351. þen þe bisshop bade hym in all haste to gone. 352. . . a rodde wit . . . haue blame.

Josep went forth as he bode was
and brouth *with* hym a long ȝerd *þat* baren was & bare.
and cam agen anon into þe same plas.
and stode *with* his felawis and made mechyl care.

And þan þe bysshopys bad hem alle *þat* þei schuld eue*r*y chone
holde vp here ȝerdys *þat* þei myght be sene.
and so þey dede in dede and after *þat* anone
þe ȝerd þat josep bare sodeynly wex al grene.

And florysshyd ful fayre *with* leef & *with* floure.
and the holy gost in lyknes of a dowe
he cam doun fro heuene *with* ful gret honoure.
and þat al men myght it se he sat al a bove.

Than seyd al þe pepyl of lewyd and leryd
after þat þey had seyn that gloryous syth
now it is wel knowyn and sekerly schewyd
that josep schal wedde mary of bewte so bryth

Bot meche folk meruelyed of þat maryage
and why that god wolde ordeyne swyche a weddyng.
of so ȝong a maydyn and a man of gret age
and what was þe cause was her carpyng.

And som *þer* ben þat ȝet wyln also þe same qwestion
why wold god hym self be born in wedlake
rather þan be syde this is here reson
and of þis mater many men mowseng þei make.

But herto answeryn clerkys as j vnderstond
and telle þe cause why. crist wold be bred
and born of a maydyn þat hath an housbond
and nouth of a maydyn *þat* neue*r* had be weddyd

Joseph's rod flourishes.

[fol. 27*b*]

Why Mary was wedded to Joseph.

353. . . his biddyng was. 354. . . rodde *þat* bara*n* and bare. 356. . . he had full mekill kare. 357. þen þe bisshop bade þat . . . 358. . . *þer* ȝerdes . . . 359. So þei did and after *þat* a nonne. 360. þe rod . . . waxid grene. 363. . . right gret . . . 364. . . myght it se and stode euen aboue. 365. þen saide all peopill bope lerned and lewde. 367. Now is hit . . . openly shewde. 368. . . mare so bright. 369. Moche peopill. . . 370. And why god wolde . . . 371. . . and of a man of age. 372. . . cause of ther carping. 373. And sum ther be ȝit *þat* will aske this question. 374. . . be borne of a maide. 375. . . is þeir resonne. 376. . . grete musinge thei make. 377. Herto aunswerith . . . 379. . *þat* neuer had husbonde.

Ffor god wold hym self þat sche schuld hym bere.
in þe lawe of wedlak þat hym self ordand
and for þ*a*t no man schuld desyre her ne dere
vnder þe same lawe he dede his moder stand. 384

Ffor ȝif sche had be maryed to no man
and had be w*ith* chyld on þe maner as sche was.
she schuld be slaunderyd w*ith* many on certayn
and haue had sorwe and schame for no trespas. 388

And therefore crist had leu*er* þat som folk were in dowte
on what wyse and whow he myght be borne
than sche were put to a slaunder to all folk abowte
and her name and her fame on þ*a*t wyse wer lorn*e* 392

[fol. 28*a*] And for another skyl she had an housbond
iosep that was gentyl for he schuld take hede
and go w*ith* her and be w*ith* her on watyr and on lond
and be trewe wytnes of her maydenhede. 396

And oure lady bare cryst for a nother skyll
A mayden and maryed mayden and wyff
for god wyl wondrys werke at his owyn wyl
þat þe fende schal not knowe þ*a*t sterer*e* of stryff 400

Ffor þe fende supposyd because þ*a*t sche was wedded
þat þe chyld had be getyn and brought forth of two
but he knowe nought þe mater of her maydenhed
for þat he was deseyuyd and many a jew also. 404

Ffor ȝif þe deuel had wyst þ*a*t he had be godds sone
he durst nought atempte hym w*ith*owtyn ony fayl.
but crist knowyth best. q*wa*t is for to done
soffryd hym to tempte hym & hym to asayl. 408

383. And þ*a*t woman shuld nethir hurte ne dere. 385. . . vnto no man. 386. . . euen as . . . 387. She shulde aben slaunerd of many in s*er*tayne. 389. þ*er*to criste . . . 390. . . how þ*a*t he . . . 391. þ*en* she to haue a slaunder . . . 392. Hir name and hir fame on þat wise be borne. 393. . . an husbonde. 394. . . for cause he shuld . . . 395. Euer to be w*ith* her on . . . 398. A maiden mered and also a wif. 400. . . be sterer of strif. 401. . . be cause she . . . 402. . . brought forþe too. 405. If þe . . . he had be . . . 407. But crist þ*a*t knawith . . .

And also he soffryd hym to tempte other men
to betraye jhū cryst throw som fals tresou*n*
as judas and other mo. þan vx^{ne} or ten
þat put hym ful petously to his passion.

And other maystris of þe lawe lesse & more.
pylat and herrowd w*ith* all her meyne
þat boffeted him and beten him ful sad & ful sore
And alle he soffryd mekely blyssyd mote he bene. Amen.

Nowe haue ȝe herd of þe maryage of myld mary.
on q*wat* wyse it was don & for q*wat* skyl.
nowe schul ȝe here a short word of the story.
whow crist was conceyvyd throw his owen wyl.

[fol. 28b]

Anon as þe maryage of mary was mad
god sent to her his anngell gabryel
to grete her and comfort her and her to glad
and tydynggs þ*at* were*n* trewe her for to tel.

Gabriel greets Mary.

And thus he sayd to her w*ith* a myld steuene
heyl mary ful of grace oure lord is with the.
þu schal conceyve and bere goddys sone of heuene
and passyng al women blyssyd schal þu be.

Mary was astonyed of his tale tellyng.
and askyd hym on q*wat* wyse it myght be so.
and answeryd and seyd throw þe holy gosts werkyng.
and many good words pei had betwene hem too.

But at þe last oure lady on þis man*er* seyde
on to þe anngel þ*at* her grette þ*at* hyght gabryel.
thy word be wrought in me so þ*at* god be payed
and anon she conceyvyd crist as oure bokys tel.

The Immaculate Conception.

409. And *is omitted.* 410. And to betray Ihū Crist w*ith* sum fals treson. 411. . . . mo þe*n* .v. or tenne. 412. *MS. blank.* 413. . . boþe Iesse and more. 414. As pilate . . . þ*er* meane. 415. þat sufferd hem and did bete þ*em* full sore. 417. . . herd þe mariage . . . 422. God sent vnto hir . . . 423. . . comfort hir and glad. 424. *MS. blank.* 425. And þ*is* he saide to mare w*ith* a mylde steuen. 427. . . in heue*n*. 428. And *is omitted.* 430. And askid one . . . þat hit . . . 431. He aunswerid . . . 434. . . þ*at* her grette *is omitted.* 435. . . god be p*re*sid. 436. And *is omitted.*

Nouth on þat maner wyse as other women done
swych conceyvyn of men as god ordand
and many day go þerwith be it dowter or sone
or it waxin or qwyk as j vnderstand.

Christ is perfect at his conception.

But in þat same tyme and in þe same oure a noon.
Whan cryst was conceyvyd fel þis mervayl.
cryst was a parfyte chyld of fleyssh blod & boon
with alle his feturs fully withowtyn ony fayl.

As was as wyse and as wytty on þe same day.
þat he was conceyvyd of his modyr dere.
as he was aftyrward as clerkys say.
whan he had of age ful xxx^{ti} ȝere.

[fol. 29a]

A prayer to Christ, Mary, and St. Anne.

Now blyssid be þis barne þat born was of a mayde
and blyssyd be this maydyn þat brouth forth þis berth
and blyssyd be sent anne her moder as men saye
in þe worchep of whom we make alle oure merth.

And mary and her moder maynteth this gylde
to þe worchep of god and of his plesaunce
and alle þat it mayntene it be it man or chylde
god of his hey grace ȝeue hem good chaunce.

Good ende and good lyff mote þei alle haue
and crystyn folk oure fo and oure frende
and god saue vs alle þat al thyng may saue
and bryng vs to þe blys þat lestyth with owtyn ende Amen.

437. Non in þat wise as o*þer* women done. 438. . . haþe ordande. 439. Many daies gone be hit . . . 440. . . be waxen quycke . . . 441. In þe same tyme a how*er* anone. 444. W*it is omitted.* 445. And wise and as witty . . . 447. . . as þees clerk*es* say. 448. . . had age fully xxx yere. 449. . . of mare.• 450. . . þat maiden . . . 451. . . as I say. 452. Ffor of þes iij^{e} blessid Spronge is o*ur* myrthe. 453–54. In þe worship of whom we be gederd all
To be mery and glad in honest maner.
455–56. *MS. blank.* 457. And good liue and good ende þat we may haue. 458. And all cristen folke . . . 460. . . his blis . . .

NOTES

TO THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA MANUSCRIPT

In the following notes, the lines to which the notes refer are numbered at the beginning of each note. Glosses follow the usual form. Titles and Latin quotations are italicized.

8. The reference is to the Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew. Cf. the introduction.

9, 15. **Grew** is the common M.E. spelling for Greek. Cf. *Merlin* (E.E.T.S. 36) III, 437. **Ierslem** is common also for Jerusalem. Both spellings, in these words, indicate actual pronunciations. Many such spellings and contractions are used throughout the poem. The letters supplied in expanding contractions have been italicized in the introduction, collations, notes, and text.

17. Joachim was the husband of Anne.

37–39. The account of Joachim's division of his property varies in the different versions of the story, but they all agree on the tripartite division.

47. **Meynyhe** is a Nth. form of **mainē, menyē** (O.F. **maisnee, mainee**), household.

52–55. Anna (Anne) is the legendary mother of the Virgin Mary. The A version of the Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew says that she was the daughter of Ysachar. The B version agrees with the text in saying that she was the daughter of Agar. She is not to be confused with Anna the Prophetess. In MS. Bodl. 10234, f. 22a, ll. 57–60, the names of Anne's parents are given as jsacar and naȝaphat.

60. This statement is contained in the B version of the Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew but not in the A version.

79. The A version of Pseudo-Matthew says that Reubin was the priest who refused Joachim's offering. The B version says it was Ysachar. See Tischendorf's *Evangelia Apocrypha*, pp. 57–58. The Gospel of the Nativity and the *Cursor Mundi* both have Issachar (Isacar).

84. Ll. 82–84 and 85–87 are transposed in the MS. This is obviously a scribal error, for both the rime and the sense require the present position.

85. **Agrysed**, afraid, in terror. Cf. Chaucer's *House of Fame*, 210. The reason for the fear is explained in the next two verses.

91. **Vised**, *ppl.* vise (O.F. **viser**), view, contemplate, regard.

107. **Whik** is a form of quik, O.E. **cwic**, alive. Cf. *The Death of St. Andrew* in Horstman's *Altenglische Legenden, Neue Folge*, l. 5 : And said al quik þai suld him brin.

130. In the French *Le Romanz de Saint Fanuel et de Sainte Anne et de Nostre Dame et de Nostre Segnor et de Ses Apostres* the angel appears to Joachim first. See the *Revue des langues romanes*, XXVII, 157 ff.

163. **Skyll**, cause or reason. Cf. Chaucer's *House of Fame*, l. 726.

224. "Als says þe boke." Cf. the Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew III.

229. **Swēyme**, O.E. **swǣman**, to grieve; M.E. (n.) **swime**, dizziness or swoon; hence his sorrow caused him to lie in a swoon. Cf. **sweme**, also *York Plays*, XL, 40:

Þat swettyng was swemyed for **swetyng**.

230. **Fra undron unto euensang tyme** was probably from about the middle of the forenoon until about six o'clock in the afternoon, or just before sunset, when the evening song was sung. See Skeat's discussion of **undern** in his ed. of Chaucer, VI, 275.

245. **Belefte**, to leave behind, abandon, let go. Cf. Gower's *Conf. Amantis*, II, 3458: Ther was nothing beleft.

255. Pseudo-Matthew has thirty instead of twenty days.

275. In the French poem, *op. cit. sub.* 130, there is a natural instead of a miraculous conception.

301. the **xv greces** are apparently the fifteen steps leading into the temple. See Tischendorf, *op. cit.*, p. 61. According to *Promptorium Parvolorum*, footnote, p. 209, "the term grece seems to be derived from the plural of gre, a step."

370–72. Three lines are lacking in this stanza, though there is no break in the MS. The passage is from Pseudo-Matthew VI, the context of which is as follows: *Hanc autem regulam sibi statuerat, ut a mane usque ad horam tertiam orationibus insisteret; a tertia autem usque ad nonam textrino opere se occuperet: a nona vero hora iterum ab oratione non recedebat usque dum illi angelus domini appareret, de cuius manu escam acciperet, et melius atque melius in dei laudibus proficiebat. Denique cum senioribus virginibus in dei laudibus ita docebatur, ut iam nulla ei in vigiliis prior inveniretur, in sapientia legis dei eruditior, in humilitate humilior, in carminibus Davidicus elegantior, in caritate gratiosior, in castitate purior, in omni virtute perfectior.*

409. The A version of Pseudo-Matthew says that Mary was fourteen years old, but the B version says that she was twelve. Both the Gospel of the Nativity and the *Cursor Mundi* have fourteen years.

445–56. Cf. Genesis IV. 8 and Pseudo-Matthew VII. In two articles on Chaucer's use of the expression "corones two," P.M.L.A. 26, 315 ff. and 29, 129 ff., Professor John L. Lowes has shown the relationship of the crown of roses and the crown of lilies to martyrdom and virginity. He has cited documents both prior to and contemporary with Chaucer to show that this legend was widespread and has attributed its origin to the *Legenda Aurea*. He has failed, however, to cite Ch. VII of Pseudo-Matthew, which reads as follows: *Tunc Abiathar sacerdos obtulit munera infinita pontificibus, ut acciperet eam filio suo tradendam uxorem. Prohibebat autem eos Maria dicens: Non potest fieri ut ego virum cognoscam aut me vir cognoscat. Pontifices autem et omnes eius affines dicebant ei: Deus in filiis colitur et in posteris adoratur, sicut semper fuit in Israel. Respondens autem Maria dixit illis: Deus in castitate primo omnium colitur, ut comprobatur. Nam ante Abel nullus fuit iustus inter homines, et iste pro oblatione placuit deo, et ab eo qui displicuit inclementer occisus est. Duas tamen coronas accepit, oblationis et virginitatis, quia in carne sua nunquam pollutionem admisit. Denique et Helias cum esset in carne assumptus est, quia carnem suam virginem custodivit. Haec ego didici in templo dei ab infantia mea, quod deo cara esse possit virgo. Ideo hoc statui in corde meo ut virum penitus non cognoscam.* This passage is earlier than anything cited by Professor Lowes. See *M.L.N.* XLI (1926), pp. 317–18. The late Professor O. F. Emerson has traced this flower symbolism back to St. Ambrose (P.M.L.A., XLI, 252 ff.), and Miss Roberta D. Cornelius has noted a somewhat similar symbolism in the works of St. Cyprian (P.M.L.A., XLII, 1055 ff.).

515. **Selkouþ**, *adj.*, O.E. **seldcuþ**, rare, strange, wonderful. Cf. the Prologue to the *Cursor Mundi*, l. 5 :

Sanges sere of selcuth rime.

518 and 548 ff. Only here and in the B version of Pseudo-Matthew does Joseph's rod bear **nutes** (**nottes**). In all other versions of the story the rod blossoms, or bears flowers and fruit, and the dove descends from heaven and lights on the rod instead of ascending from the rod. See Tischendorf, *op. cit.*, pp. 67–68, for the various versions. The B version reads as follows : *et in cuius virga hoc signum apparebit, videlicit illa quae fronduerit et nuces protulerit, et de cuius cacumine egredietur columba et volabit ad caelos; illi tradas Mariam.*

573. **Wrake**, O.E. **wrāēc**, has the sense of revenge. Cf. the *Songs of Laurence Minot*, XI, 6.

593. Cf. Luke 1. 39 ff.

613–15. The Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew VIII, gives the names of the five maids who worked with Mary as Rebecca, Sephora, Susanna, Abigea, and Cael. *Legenda Aurea* (Graesse Ed.), p. 589, says there were seven maids ; but it gives no names.

627. **Dedeygne**, M.E. **dedaynen**, here means scorn or disdain. Cf. *York Plays*, V, 11 : And þer-at dedeyned me.

653ff. According to the A version of Pseudo-Matthew, the annunciation scene is **iuxta fontem** by **angelus domini**. According to the B version it is in Mary's "habitationem."

690. **Umlap**, meaning to wrap or surround like a cover, is a contraction of **umbilappen**, which does not occur in O.E. Stratmann-Bradley's *Middle English Dictionary* gives no information concerning its origin. Cf. O.N. **um**, older **umb**, in such words as **umkringja**, to surround, and M.E. **bi-lappen**, to wrap around. Cf. the *Death of St. Andrew*, l. 243 :

And umbilappid his bodi about. . .

Cf. also *York Plays*, XLV, 66.

709–711. In Pseudo-Matthew X, Joseph has been **in Capharnaum maritima**. See Tischendorf, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

766–68. Cf. Miss Lucy Toulmin Smith's ed. *York Plays*, XIII, 134–137.

796–98. Three lines are wanting in this stanza, but there is no break in the MS. The passage is based on Pseudo-Matthew XI, which reads as follows : *Exsurgens autem Ioseph a somno gratias egit deo suo, et locutus est Mariae et virginibus quae erant cum ea et narravit visum suum. Et consolatus est super Maria, dicens : Peccavi, quoniam suspicionem aliquam habui in te.*

801. **Bor** is probably a scribal error for **boþ**, which the context demands.

806. Here the writer seems to be following the A version of Pseudo-Matthew in calling the priest **Abyathar**. The B version has **Isachar**, as in l. 79. See Tischendorf, *op. cit.*, pp. 73–74.

820. In the MS. **ye** is crossed out after **sayd**.

865. In Pseudo-Matthew Mary prays to **dominus Adonay**.

880. *Ibid.* Mary is not led to Anna after the trial but **domuum suum**.

893. Cf. Luke ii. 1.

902. After **pay** the MS. has *t*.

906. **Syr Egryne** is probably the Cyrenius of Luke ii. 2.

907. **Lyrd** is crossed out in the MS. after **hade**.

919. The MS. has **hẏm**.

925. **Welke** as the reduplicated pret. indicates a conservative treatment of verbs in a text of the date of this one.

939. For **way** the MS. has **Way**.

945. For **wer** the MS. has ꝺ̄.

963–65. Again three lines are omitted without break in the MS. The passage is based on Pseudo-Matthew XIII, par. 2: *Et cum haec dixisset, iussit angelus stare iumentum, quia tempus adxenerat pariendi; et praecepit discendere de animali Mariam et ingredi in speluncam subterraneam, in qua lux non fuit unquam sed semper tenebrae, quia lumen diei penitus non habebat. Ad ingressum vero Mariae coepit tota spelunca splendorem habere, et quasi sol ibi esset ita tota fulgorem lucis ostendere; et quasi esset ibi hora diei sexta, ita speluncam lux divina illustravit; nec in die nec in nocte lux ibi divina defuit quamdiu ibi Maria fuit. Et ibi peperit masculum, quem circumdederunt angeli nascentum et natum adoraverunt dicentes: Gloria in excelsis deo et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis.*

967–68. These two verses have no prototype in Pseudo-Matthew.

977. **Hatt,** reduplicated pret. See note to l. 925.

977–78. In Pseudo-Matthew the two "obstetrices" are called Zelome and Salome. The *Legenda Aurea* calls them Ȝebell and Salome (p. 42).

1027. **Yhape,** O.E. **gēap**, crooked, bent, deceitful, cunning; M.E. **ȝēap**, eager, bold, prompt. Cf. yappely and ȝappele (O.E. **gēaplīce**) in *York Plays*, XXX, 331, and XLIV, 127.

1066. **Hōgely,** O.F. **ahuge** + O.E. **-lice**, hugely. Wyclif, Gen. XVII. 2, has **hugeli**. The *Wars of Alexander*, l. 269 of E.E.T.S. ed., Sec. Series 47, has: ȝe behold me sa hogely quare-on is ȝour mynd?

1107. This verse does not rime with the following verses. It probably should read "gette."

1126–52. This part of the story does not appear in Pseudo-Matthew. There are, however, similar accounts in *Legenda Aurea*, p. 41, and in Peter Comester's *Historia Scholastica* (Migne's *Patrologia*, Tom. 198, Col. 1539).

1157. Pseudo-Matthew XV has the sixth instead of the seventh day. Other accounts have the eighth day. Cf. Luke ii. 21.

1171. The purification takes place thirty-two days after the circumcision, or thirty-nine days after the nativity. Pseudo-Matthew XV says that it was according to the law of Moses, which would place the purification on the fortieth day after the Nativity. See Leviticus xii. The Arabic Gospel of the Infancy and *Legenda Aurea*, p. 159, both say that the purification took place on the fortieth day after the nativity.

1189–92. Pseudo-Matthew XV gives the age of **Simon** (Simeon) as 112 years. Cf. Luke ii. 25 ff.

1210–12. These lines are omitted without break in the MS. The passage is following Pseudo-Matthew XV, par. 3, which reads as follows: *Erat autem in templo domini Anna prophetissa, filia Phanuel, de tribu Asser, quae vixerat cum viro suo annis septem a virginitate sua; et haec vidua erat iam per annos octoginta quatuor; quae nunquam discessit a templo domini, ieiuniis et orationibus vacans. Haec accedens adorabat infantem dicens quoniam in isto est redemptio seculi.* Cf. Luke ii. 36–38. The writer of the French *Le Romanz de Saint Fanuel*, *op. cit.*, erroneously conceived Phanuel, the father of Anna the Prophetess, as the father of Anna, the mother of the Virgin Mary.

1225 ff. The A version of Pseudo-Matthew does not give the names of the three kings. The B version gives the names as Guaspar, Melchior, and Balthasar. See

Tischendorf, *op. cit.*, pp. 83–84. The *Historia Scholastica*, *op. cit.*, Tom. 198, Col. 1542, follows the B version. *Legenda Aurea*, p. 88, and *Cursor Mundi*, ll. 11492 ff., have the same names as the poem in ll. 1330–39.

1294–96. Three lines are omitted, but there is no break in the MS. The gap is bridged in Pseudo-Matthew XVI, end of par. 1, as follows: *Tunc Herodes rex vocavit magos ad se et diligenter inquisivit ab eis quando eis apparuit stella. Et misit eos in Bethleem dicens: Ite et interrogate diligenter de puero; et cum inveneritis eum, renuntiate mihi, ut et ego veniens adorem eum.*

1367. **He** is written over **þai** in the MS.

1424. **Spayned**, Nth. and Scot., weaned; cf. O.E. **spanan**, to allure, entice, persuade, seduce, Ger. Dutch **spänen**, **spenen**. Cf. also *Cursor Mundi*, 3018: Quen he was spaned fra þe pap.

1427. Pseudo-Matthew does not give the number of innocents slain by Herod. *Cursor Mundi*, l. 11579, has the same number as the poem, 144,000.

1436. Herod does not slay himself in Pseudo-Matthew. In *Cursor Mundi*, ll. 11797 ff., he is slain by traitors at the instigation of his son, the Archylaus of l. 1438.

1448 ff. Pseudo-Matthew XVIII and XIX has two accounts of the homage paid to Jesus by the wild beasts of the desert, whereas this poem has only one. The poem adds Joseph's thanks to Jesus for saving the party from the wild beasts.

1476. **Whaht**, O.E. **hwæt**, augury, fortune, fate. **Wahat** is written on the next line in the MS.

1489. In the MS. **a** has been added by another hand before **aurneye**.

1498 ff. The **was** of l. 1498 is repeated in the MS. The date tree under which Mary rested is called a palm tree in Pseudo-Matthew.

1503. The MS. has **menȝe** on the next line.

1534. After **well**, **w^{t} wat^{o}** is crossed out in the MS.

1540 ff. Cf. Revelations xxii.

1552. **To mary** is crossed out after **Ihesus** in the MS.

1564. The MS. is defective and the reading uncertain in the middle of this line.

1573 ff. In the A version of Pseudo-Matthew XXII, **sotinen** is the name of the city in which Joseph took refuge. Here he lodges in the temple. In the B version the name of the city is **Sotrina**. Here Joseph and his family lodge in the house of a widow. The poem, as usual, follows the B version, which differs greatly from the A version beyond this chapter.

1596. The MS. has **yklone**.

1614. **Farly** is crossed out after **was** in the MS.

1635. After the last word in the line, **-ght** is added below.

1675 ff. For variant versions of this incident, see Tischendorf, *op. cit.*, p. 91.

1705 ff. Cf. Exodus xiv.

1727 ff. At this point the A version of Pseudo-Matthew records the return from Egypt. The B version records a miracle of grain and dead fish. Neither incident is in the poem. From this point to l. 2076 there is considerable variation from all versions of Pseudo-Matthew. Cf. variants in Tischendorf, *op. cit.*, pp. 92 ff. Events not recorded in Pseudo-Matthew include an account of the return from Egypt, the miracle of Jesus and the outlaw, the fall of the false gods in Judea, the account of Mary Magdalene, and the anointing scene at the house of Simon the Leper. These differences, with some other incidents, might lead one at first glance to suspect that the poem is a redaction of the French *Le Romanz de Saint Fanuel*. A close comparison of the two texts has convinced me, however, that this is not the case. The differences between this poem and the French one are much more numerous and

significant than those between this poem and the B version of Pseudo-Matthew. It seems reasonable to suppose that if the writer had been following a poem already complete, he would have followed his source more closely than this poem follows *Le Romanz de Saint Fanuel*. The additions to and variations from the B version of Pseudo-Matthew seem to be drawn from the author's knowledge of the gospels and of popular legends rather than from another poem.

1765. The small letter *b* is written in the margin of the MS.

1774. The word **at** is written in the margin of the MS.

1793. **Tytter**, Nth. Dial., comp. *of* **tite**, adv., more readily, more willingly, sooner, rather. N.E.D. Cf. *Cursor Mundi*, 28120 (Cott.):

> And titter wald i lesyng make
> þat man my worde vn-trew to take.

2014. **Salbour** is apparently drawn from M.E. **slaberen**, to slobber. Here it seems to mean the perspiration taken from Jesus' face.

2022. The MS. has **Solowed** instead of folowed.

2032. After **and, hyse** is crossed out in the MS.

2039. **Pop** is probably a derivative of the O.F. **popiner**, though the origin is uncertain. It means to paint, to adorn with a cosmetic. N.E.D.

2076. The rime is imperfect. Perhaps "ȝette" was intended, or perhaps the poet replaced rime by assonance.

2077–2232. In the A version of Pseudo-Matthew XXX, XXXI, and XXXVIII Zachyas is both the advisor of Joseph and Mary and the teacher of Jesus, who puts him to shame by the display of superior wisdom. The B version combines this account into a single series of incidents regarding the attempt to educate Jesus. The poem follows the B version.

2079. This line does not rime with the remainder of the stanza. It rimes with the preceding couplet instead.

2119. "Manstate at draw," *i.e.* he began to draw to man's estate.

2207. **For** is written in the margin of the MS. before this line.

2233–2256. Pseudo-Matthew gives no account of this incident.

2257–80. In the A version of Pseudo-Matthew Jesus, not the maid, is sent to the well. The B version is similar to the poem.

2281–2304. The A version of Pseudo-Matthew XXXIV gives the miracle of the wheat. Cf. ll. 2614 ff. The B version gives this and the James Alpheus incident. Following this, the A version, XXXV and XXXVI, gives a miracle of Jesus and a lioness and one of the partition of the waters of the Jordan. These are in neither the B version nor the poem. The James Alpheus incident is given in ch. xli of the A version, but there the victim is James, son of Joseph.

2305–2367. The A version of Pseudo-Matthew says that Jesus lengthened the beam for Joseph. It does not give the incident of leaping onto the sunbeams. The B version gives both incidents but says that Jesus lengthened the beam for "quidam architector lignifaber." The poem follows B. Chapters XXXVIII and XXXIX of the A version give a second series of incidents attending the attempt to educate Jesus according to the accepted method. The B version includes these incidents in Chapters XXX and XXXI. Cf. ll. 2077–2232 of the poem.

2317. **Sayd** is repeated in the MS.

2377–2940. These lines have no counterpart in Pseudo-Matthew, nor have I been able to find sources for them except in the few cases noted below.

2455–81. This incident is related in the poem printed in Horstmann's *Altenglische Legenden*, Paderborn, 1875, pp. 24 ff.

2474. At the point where I have read *ihesus* the MS. has been changed and is illegible.

2592. For a discussion of the **somer play** see Chambers' *Mediaeval Stage*, I, 114, 126, 173, and 183. Note that all the children were singing and that each one carried a green branch in his hand. The passage shows a power and exactness of portrayal indicating personal knowledge. Doubtless the author had witnessed many of these popular summer feasts and plays.

2665–2772. Cf. Horstmann, *op. cit.*, pp. 39 ff. The Arabic Gospel of the Infancy XXXVII has a variant account of this incident.

2726. After **may** in the MS. **W** is written.

2769. **Blan** is pret. of **blinnen**, *to cease.*

2793. A **shout** is a flat-bottomed boat used on canals and shallow rivers. It is still used in England, according to the *Century Dictionary.*

2845–2940. Cf. *Cursor Mundi*, ll. 12577 ff., and Luke iii. 41–52, for slightly different versions of this part of the story. I find no account exactly similar to that in the poem.

2941–2988. The A version of Pseudo-Matthew XLII gives an account of a banquet of Joseph and his sons. The B version notes Joseph's death and gives an account of Anne's three husbands and her children by each husband. Variants are to be found in the Latin Gospel of Thomas XV and in *Cursor Mundi*, ll. 12485 ff. Cf. also the corresponding account in the poem from MS. Bodl. 10234 printed herewith. The Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew ends at this point in the story.

2989–3042. Cf. Matthew ix. 27–32, which has two men.

3043–3126. See notes on ll. 2941–88. The same account is to be found in *Legenda Aurea*, p. 586 (Graesse ed.). *Cursor Mundi*, ll. 12517 ff., omits the death of Joseph.

3127–92. Cf. Matthew viii. 2–14.

3130–32. This stanza lacks three verses, but there is no break in the MS. See Matthew, *ibid.*, for the context.

3160. **Bonetyuouse** is a peculiar spelling of **bountevous**. For the latter form see Chaucer's *Troilus*, I, 883.

3174–76. Three lines missing without break in the MS. Cf. Matthew viii. 5–14.

3193–3240. Cf. Matthew ix. 9, and Luke v. 1–12.

3241–3324. Cf. John ii. 1–12, and Horstmann, *op. cit.*, p. 58.

3267. According to rime, this line belongs with the preceding stanza; but the stanzaic structure demands the present position. **All** is probably a scribal insertion.

3337–72. Matthew xx. 30–34 has two men.

3373–3408. Cf. Matthew xix. 27–30.

3409–57. This same source is given in the B version of Pseudo-Matthew XLII. Cf. Tischendorf, *op. cit.*, pp. 111–12.

NOTES

TO MS. TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE, 601

(English Poets R. 3. 21)

1. After the **incipit** the name of Lydgate is added in a different hand from that in which the MS. is written. It has already been suggested that this is probably an addition by Stow.

32. **Parage**, birth, perhaps generalized to status, rank, nature. Cf. Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, D 250. The line probably means "which are devoid of reason by their very nature."

99. Lydgate's name is added after the prologue as in l.

106. **This day** is Saint Anne's Day (July 26).

129. **Cardyd**, purified as wool is when carded.

169. See the apocryphal Gospel of the Nativity of Mary, I, 1–3.

215. **Of oure fadyr Iacob, lowsyng the bond** refers to God's covenant with Jacob and the promise of a Redeemer. Cf. Numbers xxiv. 17–19, and 1 Chronicles xvi. 17.

218. Cf. Genesis **xxxv**. 22.

223. Cf. Ezek. xxiv. 24 and Matthew i. 8–9.

229. **Lemes**, O.E. **lēoma**, flames. Cf. Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, B 4120.

232. This Iudas is not Judas Iscariot but Judas, brother of Jesus. Cf. Matthew xiii. 55. Levi is the son of Alpheus. Cf. Mark ii. 14.

236. Cf. Eph. ii. 20, where Christ is called the **chief corner stone of the building**.

247. Cf. note to l. 106.

295. Professor Carleton Brown suggested to me that **boose** might be a spelling of **busch**, which the context requires. That his suggestion was correct is evidenced by the following passage from E.E.T.S., Extra Series 19, p. 296: "By this busshe ys vnderstonde our lady *th*at was fyred & brente not. for she was moder w*ith*out losse of maydenhod." And William of Shoreham, vi. 19, "þou art þe bosche of synay."

297. **Gloose**, deceit. Cf. *Cursor Mundi*, 26774:

> þai come to scrift a glos to make.

302 ff. This allegory of the thorns seems to be an application of Matthew xiii. 18–23 to the Jews.

312 ff. This stanza is largely a repetition of ll. 169-175. The author has wandered away from his theme and now picks it up at the beginning.

319 ff. This tripartite division of wealth, as has been noted, is common to all the accounts of Joachim and Anna.

397. The reference here is to the feeding of Mary by the angels during her sojourn in the temple. This legend is common to all the apocryphal narratives.

414 ff. The references to Matthew are doubtless to the apocryphal Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew, which was popular in both France and England.

417. **A rew** is equivalent to on row, in a row, in order. Cf. Chaucer's *House of Fame*, 1692, and *Canterbury Tales*, D 506.

421. **Omely**, or homily, is, of course, the common name for a sermon or utterance of truth. Apparently it is here used in the abstract sense and not with reference to any particular homily.

432 ff. Cf. Genesis xv. 18 and Matthew i. 1.

440. Cf. Matthew i. 1–18.

468. **Syndony**, a thin fabric of cotton, linen, or silk. *Cent. Dic.* Cf. *Joseph of Arimathia* (E.E.T.S. ed.), p. 37:

> So Joseph layde Ihesu to rest in his sepulture,
> And wrapped his body in a cloth called sendony.

509. **Rother**, rudder.

532. **Fynaunce** is here used in the sense of ransom. Cf. *Rom. of Partenay* (E.E.T.S. 22), l. 1853.

576. **Prefynyte**, *L.* **praefinitus**, *p.p.*, predetermined.

597. The same hand that wrote the remainder of the MS. has written in the left margin *Deus pars hereditate mee.*

598 ff. Cf. Psalm xvi. 5.

618. **Conspect**, F., a general view, in the sight of.

630. Anne is Hannah, mother of Samuel. Cf. 1 Samuel ii. 21.

633. **Bonechyeff**, O.F. **bon chief**, good fortune, happiness.

659. Lydgate's name is again written at the end of the poem by the same hand that wrote it in the other places.

NOTES

TO MS. BODLEY 10234

(Tanner 407)

Throughout this poem there are certain stops or periods. It is impossible to tell whether these are the result of carelessness on the part of the scribe in allowing his pen to rest after a given word or are an attempt at an elementary sort of punctuation. In any event, the text is both more interesting and more exactly reproduced by allowing it to stand without additional punctuation. It is therefore reproduced with these marks as they appear in the MS.

36 ff. Note that Mary, daughter of Anne and Cleophas and wife of Alpheus, is the mother of four children. In the Minnesota MS. version, ll. 3063 ff., she is the mother of James and Joseph only.

56. **Thys tyme of ȝeere** is the time of the Feast of St. Anne (July 26).

61. The sister of Anne is called Emeryne in the Minnesota MS. version, l. 3053.

64. **Syb**, related to, akin to. Cf. Chaucer's *Romaunt of the Rose*, 1199, and *Canterbury Tales*, B 2565.

69. The book of St. Jerome might be either the Gospel of the Nativity or the Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew, for both were attributed to him. Apparently the former is meant here, for the author follows it more closely than the latter.

103. The priest, according to the Gospel of the Nativity, was Issachar.

141. **Skyl**, cause, reason. Cf. note to Minnesota MS. version, l. 169.

149. Cf. Genesis xxx. 24 and the Gospel of the Nativity, ch. iii. Joseph was not the son of Isaac and Rebekah but of Jacob and Rachel. For the preceding ll., cf. Genesis xvii. 16–19 and xxi. 1–5.

153. Cf. Judges xiii. 24 and the Gospel of the Nativity iii.

157. Cf. Luke i. 5–20. John the Baptist is not mentioned in the Gospel of the Nativity.

224. The Minnesota MS. version, l. 301, has **xv greces**. The Gospel of the Nativity has *quindecim graduum psalmos quindecim ascensionis gradus*. Cf. note on l. 301 of the Minnesota MS. version. It is possible that the scribe had before him a version containing **grecys** and that he misread it as **pasys**.

265 ff. The miraculous powers of the Virgin Mary are not given in the Gospel of the Nativity. They are given in Pseudo-Matthew. Cf. the Minnesota MS. version, ll. 379 ff.

274. The Minnesota MS. version, following the B version of Pseudo-Matthew, has twelve instead of fourteen years as the age of Mary at this time. The Gospel of the Nativity has twelve years; so has the Protovangelion of James.

309. **Mountenans**, the length of. Cf. Chaucer's *Troilus*, ii. 1707.

316. The author freely but inaccurately renders *familia David* as **dwelling wit kyng dauyd**.

373 ff. The reasons for the virgin birth are not given in the Gospel of the Nativity.

376. **Mowseng**, musing, meditation.

411. Cf. Matthew xxvi. 47 and Luke xxii. 47. These do not give any idea of the number accompanying Judas. They simply say **a great multitude**.

443. I find no other account of the completeness and perfection of Christ at the time of his conception. This is probably an original adornment on the part of the author.

453. **This gylde** is important because it indicates that the poem was made especially for a guild celebration. The guild for which it was made was possibly the St. Anne's Guild in the "Parish of St. Peter at the Skinmarket," Lincoln, which was founded in 1344. See A. F. Westlake's *The Parish Gilds of Mediaeval England*, p. 168, and the discussion in that part of the introduction devoted to sources and authorship.

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